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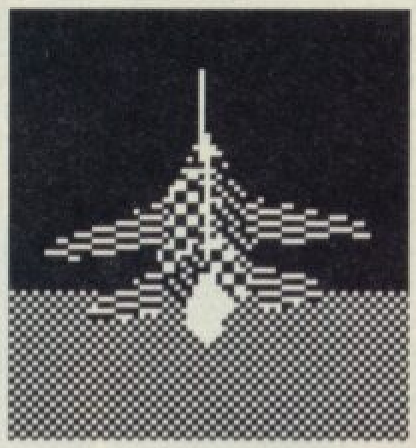

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Blimey!!
I NEVER KNEW THERE WAS SO MUCH IN IT!









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Future PUBLISHING

GAMES
REVIEWS

YOUR SINCLAIR FOU

No more Smash Tapes! Instead, we've got this, our first-ever *Your Sinclair* Four Pack, chock-a-block with more fabulous freebie games than ever before! And – another first! – it comes in a smart, easy-to-look-after plastic box! (So you can forget those label-ripping blues!) This month our snazzy compilation features the famous *Tau Ceti*, a slick and spooky 3-D shoot-'em-up/strategy game, the arcadey chase-about *Rebel*, wizard wars in *Feud* and a thoroughly playable demo of Virgin's superb newie *Ivan 'Ironman' Stewart's Super Off-Road Racer*! All in all it's a total corker (and a little bit more)!

TAU CETI

Virgin Mastertronic

We've given away some pretty fab games in our time, but *Tau Ceti* must rank in the top, ooh, 35 at the very least. It's an enormous space adventure – so big, in fact, that we've had trouble squeezing it onto the tape (so if your Speccy starts making strange creaking noises you'll know why!), and equal trouble explaining it all in the space available here. Anyway, rip it off the front of the mag, take it out of its snug little box, load it up and we'll take a look-see at what's going on, shall we?

Got it going yet? Confusing, isn't it? (I guess I'd better explain what's meant to be going on.)

Okay, imagine it's the year 2164 and a planet orbitting the star Tau Ceti is about to be recolonised by humans, the original colonisation force having been wiped out by a spooky alien disease some years earlier. Now imagine that the original humans had managed to get themselves well and truly established before the disease struck, building 30 cities, establishing a large robot maintenance and defence system, and generally settling down. And now (as a third and final stretch of the imagination), try and picture the robots going all wibbly-wobbly after being left alone for a couple of years, and not letting anybody in! (Even friendly earth-people types like yourself.)



Blimey! I think we've come across the giant interstellar equivalent of a scarecrow! (Spook!)



Whereas this looks more like a couple of massive road signs or something. *(I think it might be 'or something' actually. Ed)*

So what's to be done? Well, shutting down the Fusion reactor in the capital city of Centralis has got to be a good idea – as usually tends to be the case in these situations, once you've blown up the central thing all the other defences will shut down and everyone will live happily ever after. Of course (as also seems to be the case in these situations), rather than enlist the services of the massed forces of the entire space fleet, the powers that be have decided to send in just the one lone little ship. And (guess what?) – you're the pilot.

REBEL

Virgin Mastertronic

THX2240's your name, and working-in-a-soya-plantation-in-a-state-controlled-agricultural-block's your game. Or, at least, it was. You've got a bit fed up with it all, you see, and have decided to escape (and become a Rebel – hence, rather cleverly, the name of the game) by nicking a Crowd Control Vehicle, which looks a bit like a tank, and driving away in it.

But life's never that simple, is it, Spec-chums? There are lots of levels of the agricultural bloc to get through first, and to escape each one you'll need to find the exit and bash it in. Luckily there's a Solar Beam Generator on each level that's just the ticket for this, but – oh no! – it won't move! So what you've got to do is drive round collecting reflectors and positioning them so that they'll bounce the beam into the exit. There are only certain places where the reflectors can go (these are called reflector stations, and there are loads of them, though with very few actual reflectors to go in them) but you should find that there'll be one layout on each level that'll solve the problem. (If not, you're probably doing it all wrong.)

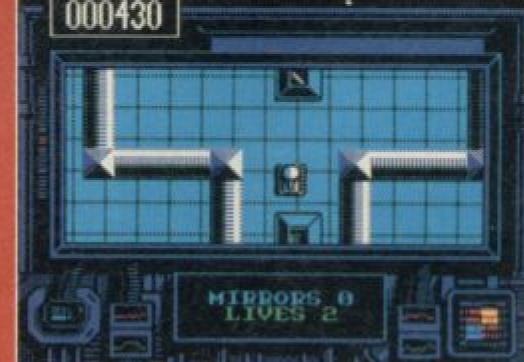
Needless to say, each level is populated by baddies. They're pretty thick though, and easily avoided. So you've got no worries really. In fact, your chances of escape, it says here, are 574 to one (against).

There's only one more thing you'll need to know – the keys...

1 Up
A Down
I Left
P Right
Bottom Row Drop/Pick Up/Rotate Reflector
ENTER Pause Game
SYMBOL SHIFT/SPACE Restart Game



Quite pretty really, isn't it?





In fact, it's so pretty I'm not sure why she wants to escape in the first place.

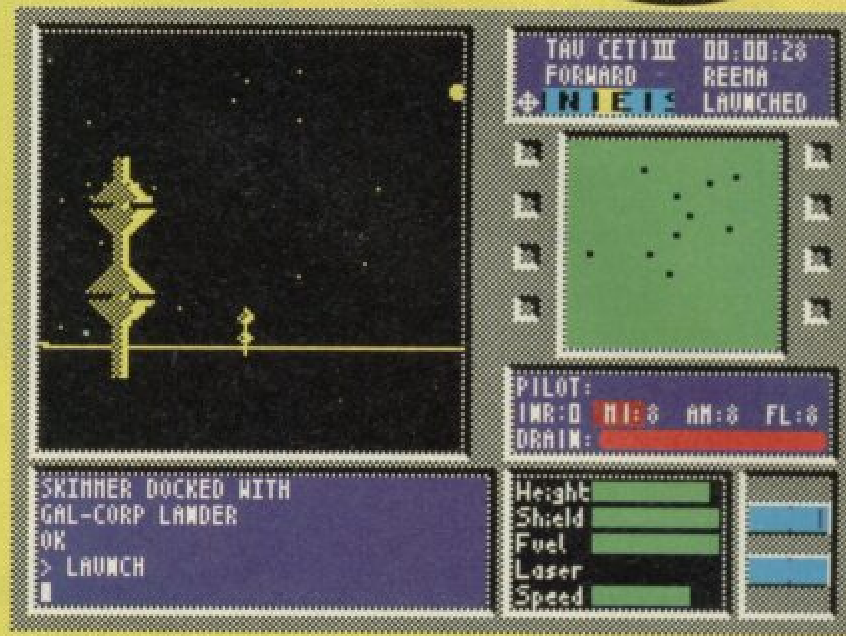
Okay, so now we all understand what the game's meant to be about, but you're probably still having problems playing it, yes? Here's the simple *YS* plan to get it all going smoothly. Right, press BREAK to stop the demo running and you'll find yourself in your skimmer-ship thingy, all docked and ready for take-off. The following commands can now be typed into your on-board computer...

HELP Lists commands below.
LAUNCH Puts you into 'flight mode' and, er, launches the skimmer.
MAP Shows a map of the planet with info about the cities. The Left, Right, Up, Down and Fire keys can be used to move around the map and select functions.
RODS Lets you assemble cooling rods during the mission.
REACTOR Gives you access to the reactor room when docked with the reactor in Centralis.
LOOK Shows a view inside the building and any objects there.
WAIT Waits for five minutes.
STATUS Gives a damage and progress report.
EQUIP Allows access to a building's repair, refuelling and rearming facilities (if it has any).
NAME Use this to enter your name.
PAD Gives you a note pad to make, um, 'notes' on.
NEW PAD Starts a fresh page.
SAVE Guess.
LOAD Oh, come on.
KEYS Lets you redefine the flight keys.
QUIT Erm...
SCORE Um...
PAUSE Er...
SIGHTS ON/OFF Well, let's think, shall we?

So what you want to do, really, is type LAUNCH. Eeek! You're now airborne, so these keys might come in handy...

O Left
P Right
S Faster
X Slower
N Fire laser
M Fire missiles
F Fire flare
A Fire AMM
R Status report
I Infra red on/off (handy at night)
H Higher
G Lower
J Jump (when near jump pad)
L Land
BREAK Pause

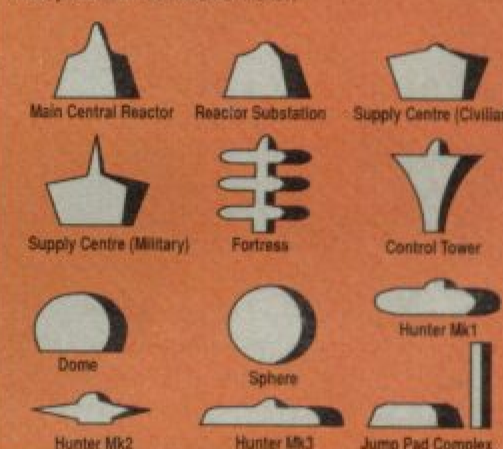
And that's it. Your skimmer will operate in two modes – flight mode (in which you control the ship with the above controls or joystick) and ground mode (in which you are in direct communication with the ship computer via the computer window). Your ship's computer contains a map of the Jump Pad network (jump pads allow you to transport yourself from city to city). Pads can be found at the NORTH, SOUTH, EAST and WEST ends of the city, and are operated by pressing J. Remember, you can dock at some buildings, and (finally) try not to get too carried away admiring the graphics because there are baddies to be shot and reactor rods to be fiddled about with. Good luck!



I wonder what they really are? (Let's dock with them and see.)

TAU CETI CITY DEFENCES

Many of the cities on Tau Ceti are defended by fortresses, guardian crawlers and other robots. There are also proximity mines littering the place – so watch out!



IVAN 'IRONMAN' STEWART'S SUPER OFF-ROAD RACER

Virgin Mastertronic

You've seen the cover, probably had a swift read through the Megapreview, so now here's the one-level demo. Hurrah! It's an extremely playable little sampler of *Ivan 'Ironman' Stewart's Super Off-Road Racer* (gasp!) and features a whole bundle of truck-racing fun. And that means you get one track from the actual game's 16 or so, perfect in every detail.

What you've got to do is drive your off-road truck (not car) round the course lots of times, hopefully staying in front of the other drivers (including Ironman himself) and thus winning the round. Along the way you'll be able to pick up extra goodies, like money and nitro power


Wheeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeee!!!!! (Etc.)

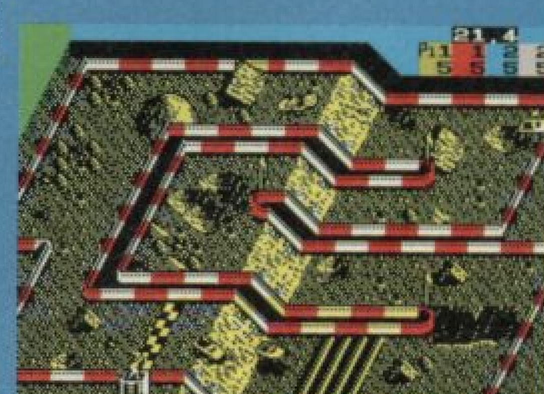
(which makes you go quite a lot faster when you press Fire).

What else? Well, you can have two trucks if you want, but as they'll be a bit tricky to handle you might be better off getting a friend to control the second one. And do try not to crash into the other trucks too much – it might be jolly good fun but it won't help you get anywhere very much.

It's a bit of a little corker really.

The keys, should you chose to discard your joystick, are as follows...

K, A Accelerate
M, Z Brake
X, N Left
C, M Right
Space Nitro


Don't worry – the trucks look a bit tiny here, but in the game they show up fine.

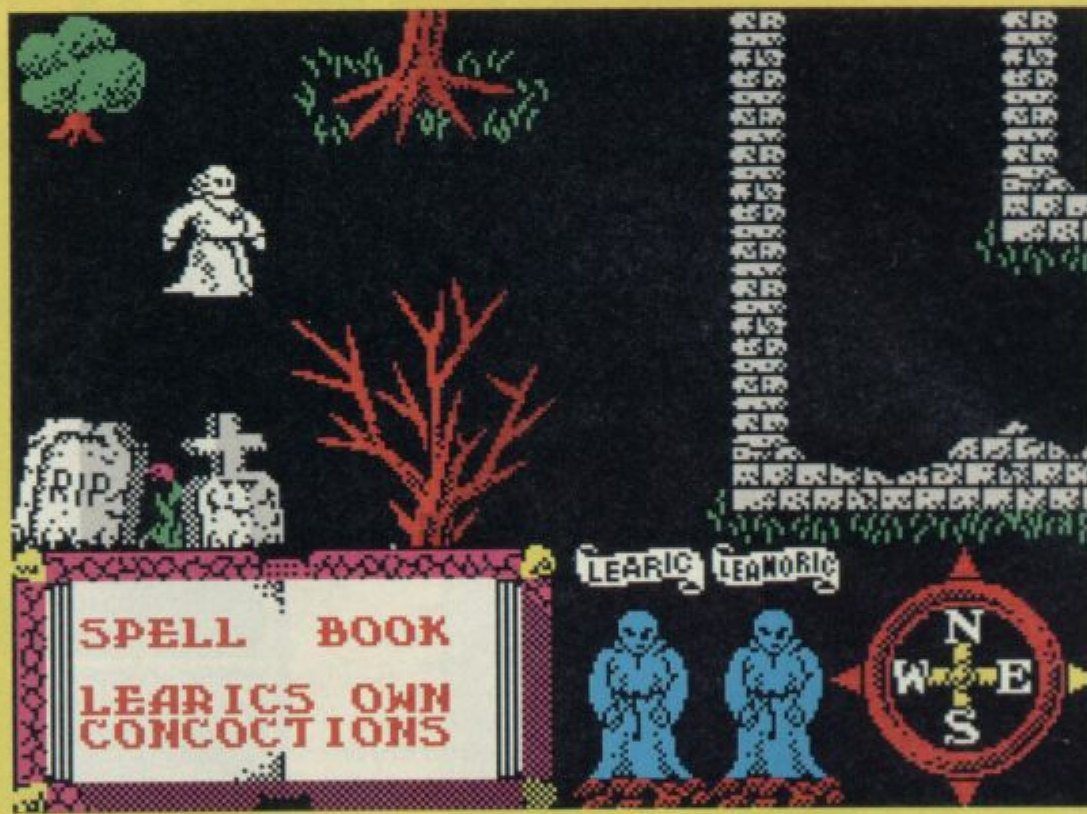
FEUD

Virgin Mastertronic

As you'll know if you've ever tried a half-decent vindaloo, the right mixture of herbs and spices can be very potent indeed. Leanoric and Learic are also aware of this, although they don't confine their culinary skills to mere foodstuffs. Oh no. Their herbs are used for making spells, and rather nasty ones at that. Unfortunately the lads have fallen out with each other, and are having a bit of a tiff (or a 'feud', as the game would have it). Which is why the game is call... but you probably guessed that already. So what they're trying to do now is out-spell each other.

Right then. You're Learic, and the computer's Leanoric. What you've actually got to do is walk round the playing area (which is a large maze affair) and collect the ingredients for spells. Once you've got the two ingredients needed to make a spell, take them to your cauldron, press Fire and then pick the required spell from the book. But which ingredients do you need for each spell? Well...

SPELL	INGREDIENTS
Teleport	Dandylion & Burdock
Protect	Piperwort & Ragwort
Sprites	Snapdragon & Toadflax
Zombie	Devilsbit & Bones
Swift	Speedwell & Mad Sage
Freeze	Bind Weed & Bog Weed
Doppleganger	Fox Glove & Catsear
Invisible	Chondrilla & Hemlock
Reverse	Thistle & Skullcap
Heal	Balm & Feverfew
Fireball	Dragonsteeth & Mousetail
Lightning	Cud Weed & Knap Weed



Hmm. Learic's going to come up against a brick wall in a minute – time to decide whether to go up or down the screen. (Much of the game is spent searching around the place for ingredients etc – a bit of map-making would be in order.)

To cast a spell, aim it at the mixing stage and press Fire. And what does each one do? Ah ha! You'll have to buy the *YSTipshop Tiptionary* and find out, won't you?! (There are actually tips for it contained somewhere inside its many bountiful pages!)

But even though we want you to go out and buy the *Tiptionary*, it's only fair to tell you the keys...

Q Up
A Down
O Left
P Right
Space Fire



No, no, no you fool! It's behind you! I dunno, these wizards. Sometimes they walk past just the most obvious ingredients. (In fact, he's so blooming blind he doesn't even seem to have noticed that suspicious hooded bloke on the right yet!)



A-ha ha! You've got the pot, you've got the spell book (you've even got the rather nifty little summer house). It's spell-making time! (Now where did I put that Dandylion and Burdock?)

TAPE TRUBBS!

Gadzooks! It happens to the best of us. Loading problems, that is. (And it's especially frustrating when it's your brand-new *YS* Four Pack that's suffering, we know.) Don't despair though! (Oh no!) The solution is a mere trek to the Post Office away! All you've got to do is wrap your tape up nice and warm and send it, with an sae, to *YS* Four Pack No1, Tape Returns (October issue), Ablex Audio Video Ltd, Harcourt, Halesfield 14, Telford, Shropshire TF7 4QD. Then just hold your horses for a week or two and a replacement will be with you before you can say "Gxnnqpqkjrjytaiieip". (Quite a few times.)



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Amiga & Atari ST Screenshots

Soaps, soaps, soaps. You can't get away from them. For no reason in particular, PSSST has an 'in-depth' look at the soap opera and its place in society today...

Pssst



DIFFERENT SOAPS FOR DIFFERENT FOLKS

There are loads of different types of soap opera – from the American 'glitzy' ones (where everyone's a billionaire) to the Australian 'friendly' ones (where everyone moves into everybody else's house at some time or another) and the British 'boring' ones (where there are a lot of farmers, goats and tractors all over the place). We thought there should be even more additions to the genre – so over the next three pages we've written a few opening scenes for 'pilot' episodes. (A production company has actually expressed an interest in these by the way, so you may see them come to life on your television screens in the not-too-distant future.)

CES 1990 (What's that?)

This year's big computer show is not the PC Show (as it has been previously) but The Computer Entertainment Show 1990, at the same venue – Earl's Court in London. Everyone who's anyone (Ocean, US Gold, Activision and so on) will be there to show off their new games – including many chances for first looks at the big Christmas stuff – and of course we'll be there too. The dates are Saturday 15th and Sunday 16th September (ie in just a couple of days time) from 10am – 6pm (5pm Sunday). Hurrah!



New Joystick Shocker!



Always exciting to see a new joystick hit the market, isn't it, Spec-chums? Well, prepare yourselves for a veritable overdose of super-excitement as Quickjoy's latest, the Top Star (which comes complete with transparent body, microswitches and a bunch of nifty sort of internal spring things) bounces onto the market. Can nothing stop it? (Short of the – gulp! – £24.95 price tag, that is.) We shall see!



Peculiar Pets Corner



Oh no! Nobody seems to have really got the grasp of this yet! We've had cats (oh, *very* unusual), we've had E Flat bass horns but we've had a pretty poor turn-out of the sort of things we were really after – crocodiles, zebras, camels, that sort of thing. To prove it, here's this month's only effort – a 'pet fruit gum called Kevin' from **David Addey** of Hornsea. Erm, well done, David.

YS SOAP PILOT 1 — GLASS MONKEYS

This is a soap opera based on the everyday workings of a double glazing firm called Mont Blanc Double Glazing. The relationships of the management, the staff and the customers are all explored.

EPISODE ONE, SCENE ONE

Ray Wise, a Mont Blanc salesman, is doing some door-to-door selling... Ding dong. Door opens revealing frail old lady. Ray adopts strategy 'G'.

Ray: Hello, Madam. I've got some free cash for you – look, £20, and there are no strings attached. It's all yours. Take it!

Woman: B-but I can't just take your money. I don't even know you...

Ray: Don't you worry about that. Just take the money. Go on. In fact, you can have £30. Here, three crisp brown ones. *(He scrunches three tenners under her nose.)*

Woman: Well, this really is most irregular. Can I think about it for a minute?

Ray: But of course. I don't want to pressure you. *(He winks)* How about a quick cup of tea while you make your mind up?

Woman: Oh, yes, of course. Do come in, young man.

Cut to double glazing van hidden down the road. Cut back to interior of house, Ray fiddling with the kitchen windows as woman fills kettle.

Ray: I say, these windows aren't going to stand up very well.

Woman: Stand up to what?

Ray: The hurricane.

Woman: Hurricane? What hurricane?

Ray: Haven't you heard? Hurricane Gertie is on its way. It's been on all the news broadcasts. John Kettley says it's going to be force 16, and apparently only very good double glazing will be able to stand up to the battering.

Woman: Oh no! Surely double glazing is very expensive?

Ray: Oh, I don't know... How much do your life savings amount to?

Woman: £3,000.

Ray: Hmm, not enough. I seem to remember reading that instant instalment costs £3,030. Your house is going to be blown to bits I'm afraid. I'm so sorry. I wish I could help.

Woman: But – the 30 pounds you offered me...

Ray: Of course! I hadn't thought of that! So you can afford it after all. I know of an excellent company – shall I phone them for you?

Woman: Yes, please do it now. I really don't know how I can ever repay you. You're so kind.

Ray: All in a day's work, Madam.

In episode two the woman tricked into buying the double glazing is killed when the faultily-installed dining room window falls on her head. A writ is issued against Mont Blanc by relatives. The managing director of the company is involved in a car crash and Ray sells a £5,000 Mont Blanc 'Viewmaster' triple glazing set to a six-year-old primary-school girl.



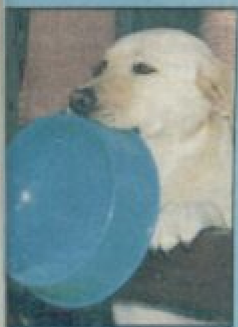


AN EXPERT'S VIEW...

Dr Tracey McFinnerty of Sunderland University is an expert on the world of the soap opera – she's spent the last 15 years studying and writing books on the subject. We gave her a buzz.

PSSST: Dr McFinnerty, tell us about soap operas.

TRACEY: I don't know where to start really. Well, did you see yesterday's *Neighbours*? I do hope Bouncer isn't dead, he's such a lovely doggy.



PSSST: We hope he is dead actually. But, no, what we want is more heavyweight stuff – the ins and outs. Why are soaps so popular? What exactly is a soap? That sort of thing... Didn't soaps start in '50s America as cheap vehicles for advertising or something?



TRACEY: You've got me there, I'm afraid. *Home And Away* though... That new bloke Tim's a bit scary, isn't he? Oh, and isn't Matt Stevenson just the dreamiest thing you ever saw? And Kylie Minogue's sister, Dannii, she's in the show now, you know.

PSSST: Yes, we know, we know. But can't you give us some jargon? The sort of gear you'd get in a thesis? Longish words and stuff?

TRACEY: May I speak within an intellectual framework?

PSSST: That's the stuff...

TRACEY: Well, it's just that I don't think Charlene is ever going to come back to Ramsay Street. Scott and Madge will be heartbroken when they realise. (Isn't Jase just the most gorgeous hunk in the world? I've got all his singles.)

Sound of the PSSST receiver being replaced rather quickly.

A REAL SOAP OPERA

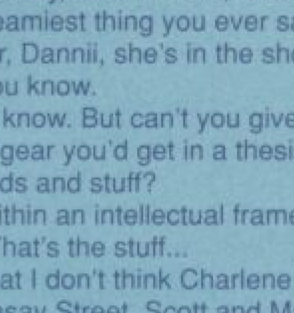
A silly name really, isn't it – a 'soap opera'. They've got nothing at all to do with detergent and nobody sings in them. We at PSSST intend to do something about this. We've written a *real* soap opera. (Well, Puccini wrote it actually, and Pavarotti sung the song from it that got into the charts during the World Cup, but you know what we mean.) Here's our translation of *Nessun Dorma* (sing along if you must)...

Nessun dorma, nessun dorma
Where's the soap? Where's the soap?
Tu pure o imperialessa
The Casson's Imperial Leather?
Nella tua fredda stanza
I bet Fred's gone and nicked it again
Guardi le stelle che tremano
I should have guarded it better
D'alore e di bar spenda
Now I'm going to have to buy another bar
Ma il mio maestero e chiuso in me
In my trusty Austin Maestro
Ma il mio nissun sapra
Although I may take the Nissan
No no shoppa tua bocca la diro
I just hope the shops are still open



ATTENTION, GIRLIES!

WIN! *A FREE DINNER DATE WITH JONATHAN DAVIES!!*



That's right! It's unbelievable (but true)! One whole evening, all expenses paid, with *YS*'s most witty, debonnair and downright decent writing bod. But "Er... why?" we hear you exclaim. Well, it all goes back to Farty really. Ever since the tragic demise of Jonathan's trusty warthog he's been beside himself with grief. (Yes, yes, yes, we know he loathed the rowdy mutt, but at least he got to enjoy some 'company'.) "Get a girlfriend, you miserable git," we encouraged him. "Don't want one," he mumbled. "But, Jonathan, the sun's shining, the birds are singing. Surely you're feeling a bit, you know... er..." And then it twigged. "You've never had a girlfriend!!! Jonathaaaan." "Oh... oh... go away," he blubbed. But we didn't. 'Cos here we are.

And there YOU are, babes! That's right – kind-hearted Speccy chums that we are, we've decided to treat JD and a chick of his choice to an evening-meal-out in sunny Bath. So send him your piccies, along with your name, address, age, a run-down of your hobbies and stuff, and your reason for wanting to spend one whole evening with JONATHAN DAVIES (in less than 25 words) by 30th September. And, who knows, you could find yourself starring in *Your Sinclair's* next thrill-a-minute photo love story! (Well, it'd be a shame not to keep such a cherished occasion for posterity, wouldn't it?)

YS SOAP PILOT 2 THE CRESCENT

A soap opera set on the street, with the cast all 'down on their luck'. They're tramps basically, and their houses are damp cardboard boxes arranged, in a semi-circle, in a disused car park. This is known as 'The Crescent', and is where all the adventures begin.

EPISODE ONE, SCENE ONE

It's cold, drizzly, and nine o'clock in the morning. Heads start poking out of the boxes. Everybody is already a bit drunk.

Bob: C'mon, man – gizza slug.
Slash: Shut it, or I'll smack ya marth in!
Jill: Stop yer shoutin'. Let's go darn the town centre an' hassle some folk – I'm darn to me last 10p.
Jimmy: *(Totally gone)* Where've all the badgers gone? There were badgers in me box but now there ain't no badgers in me box.
Slash: He's off. Oi, shut yer mouth, yer git – there ain't any badgers. You're talkin' crap again!
Jill: Where's Spider?
Spider: *(From inside his closed box)* Shut yer mouth, I'm sleepin'.
Slash: 'Ow come you 'eard 'er then. Eh? Haw haw!
Spider: *(Poking head out)* You wanna smack in the teeth or somethin'?
Eventually everyone gets up, and they all slope off to the town centre.
Spider: *(Approaching man in suit)* Spare us the price of a cuppa, guv.
Businessman: Certainly not. You'll only go and spend it on a bottle of Thunderbird Wine.
Jill: Ya posh git!
Slash: I'll smack yer head in!

And so on. In episode two, Slash discovers that he's inherited £35 from a distant relative, Jill gets a rather fetching spider's web tattooed on her neck, and Jimmy's few remaining brain-cells pack their bags and leave for pastures new. There are many new arrivals and many departures. Life continues in The Crescent.

OZ SPEAK

The Oxford English Dictionary will soon contain some new words – words that have driven up from the bottom of the planet in vehicles called *Neighbours*, *Home And Away*, *The Flying Doctors*, *A Country Practice*, *The Sullivans* and *Sons And Daughters* (to name but a few). You probably already use some of these words, such as 'barbie' or 'tinnie' – and it's only a matter of time before you'll be using the lot. Here's Joe Mangel to clue you in on a handful...

Arvo Afternoon – "There's a barbie this arvo!"
Barbie Everyone knows this – a barbequeue.
Blind Freddy A fictional character who misses everything – "Strewth, even Blind Freddy would've noticed that!"
Chook A hen.
Coldie A cold can of lager – ie a cold 'tinnie'.
Dag A square, boring person. (Someone who wears an anorak and brown corduroy trousers is rather 'daggy'.)
Galah A bounder or cad. A b*****d.
Going to woop woop Setting off for nowhere in particular.
Kangaroos in the top paddock Slippy in the head, bonkers, mad.
Pike Getting out of something, backing out. "You're nothing but a piker!"
Quids in Doing alright.
Shonky Crap quality. "My +2A is shonky."
Shoot through To leave (prematurely).
Sickie Skiving (off school, off work).
Stickybeak A noseyparker.
Troppo Barking mad (troppo being short for Tropical Disease).



GAMES CHARTS

Compiled by Virgin Megastore, Oxford Street, London W1. Last month's positions are printed in brackets.

FULL PRICE
1 (NE) *Shadow Warriors* Ocean
2 (NE) *Adidas Championship Football* Ocean
3 (NE) *Italy 1990 Winners' Edition* US Gold
4 (NE) *International 3D Tennis* Palace
5 (3) *Turrican* Rainbow Arts
6 (1) *Italy 1990* US Gold
7 (2) *Football Manager World Cup* Addictive
8 (4) *Manchester United* Krysalis
9 (RE) *Rainbow Islands* Ocean
10 (RE) *Robocop* Ocean

BUDGIES
1 (NE) *Quattro Adventure* CodeMasters
2 (NE) *Impossible Mission II* Kixx
3 (NE) *Supertrucks* Encore
4 (NE) *American Football* Zepellin
5 (5) *Match Day II* Hit Squad
6 (1) *Treasure Island Dizzy* CodeMasters
7 (NE) *Cauldron I & II* Hi-Tec
8 (NE) *Space Ace* Players
9 (NE) *4x4 Off-Road Racer* Kixx
10 (NE) *Hong Kong Phooey* Hi-Tec



Tzers

• Remember Cognito, the full price company that used to bring out things like Kenny Dalglish footie games? Well, it doesn't exist anymore. Don't despair though – Zeppelin, those Newcastle budget people (who had a stake in it), are now starting up their very own full-pricey label. First out on Impulze (ahem) will be a 3D vector graphics Formula One racing game, *Championship Run*, (out in late October) but that'll be followed by (wait for it) *Neighbours – The Computer Game* (!!) sometime nearer Xmas. Almost equally astounding though is their budget game licence – *Edd The Duck*, which features Edd running around the BBC studios causing havoc in his search for a broom. Sounds 'quackers' to us! *(You're sacked. Ed)*

• Domark are getting into the compilations biz in a big way these days. Hot on the heels of *Heroes* and *TNT* (both reviewed this ish) we have *Wheels Of Fire*, a collection of driving games (would you believe) featuring all the biggies from Christmas last year. There's *Chase HQ* (of course) and *Power Drift*, plus *Turbo OutRun* and Domark's own *Hard Drivin'* (which they're getting good value out of at the moment). Sounds like a bit of a corker, doesn't it?

• And now it's the one you've been waiting for – Ocean's Christmas 1990 line-up! All settled and comfy? Good, then we'll begin. First up of course there's *Nightbreed*, reviewed this issue, so, um, there's no real need to dwell on that. What else is there? Well, there's the nearest thing to a sure-fire chart-topper we've ever seen, *Robocop II* (yay!) followed closely by the double bill of *Navy SEALS* (the new Charlie Sheen actioner) and, of course, big Arnie's *Total Recall*. Just in case you're starting to think it's all going to be film licences, keep an eye out for *SCI* (*Special Criminal Investigation* – the sequel to the astounding *Chase HQ*) and *Narc*, another arcade licence. And that's the lot (you'd better start saving up now).

• And finally, a short round-up of other goodies to look forward to – *Tracksuit Manager 2*, from programmers Electronic Zoo, Gremlin's *Lotus Turbo Esprit Challenge*, an as-yet-un-named 'big film licence' from Activision, the conversion of the new Tom Cruise film *Days Of Thunder* from Mindscape (which will be *another* driving game), Elite's *Gremlins II* and *World Championship Soccer*, Dinamic's *Chase HQ*-type *Narco Police* and shoot-'em-up *Mega Phoenix* – and that's about all we can think of at the moment! (Enough to be getting on with though!)





YS SOAP PILOT 3

TALKING SHOP

A soap set in a high street store. The relationships and experiences of the staff are put under the microscope.

EPISODE ONE, SCENE ONE
It's a busy Saturday afternoon, and the checkout girls are hard at work...
Mary: That'll be £4.99 please, sir. Thank you. That'll be £6.02 please, madam – have you got the 2p please? Thank you. £9.99 please, sir. Thank you.
Jane: £8.99 please, sir. Thank you. £8.99 please, madam. Thank you. £22.99 please, sir. Carriers are nine pence. Thank you. £4.99 please, madam. Thank you.
Angie: £7.99 please, madam. Thank you. No – it was definitely a £10 note you gave me. That's okay. £8.59 please, sir. Thank you. That'll be – oh, there's no price on it. Mary, Mary, how much are the Odour Eaters?
Mary: £1.99, I think, Anj.
Jane: Yes, they're £1.99.
Angie: £1.99 please, madam. Thank you. £11.95 please, sir. Thank you. £3.99 please, madam. Thank you.
Tea break time comes and Mary, Jane and Angie knock off to the canteen for a ten minute gossip...
Mary: What you do last night, Anj?
Angie: Me and Sal went down the Millionaire's Club. It cost £6 to get in.
Jane: Didn't it used to be £5.50?
Angie: Yes. It's gone up 50p.
Mary: I see the Colgate's up too.
Jane: By 8p for the 125ml, yes.
Mary: And the 50ml tube's 4p more.
Angie: And did you hear about the carrier bags? Up to 11p?
Jane: Really? Where d'ya hear that?
Angie: I heard Mr Walker telling Mrs Whittaker. "The bags are going up 2p next month," he said.
Mary: Ooooohh! 11p!

And so on. In the second episode Mrs Whittaker gets her arm ripped off in the lift, Mr Walker catches his wife stealing a Jeffrey Archer book and Mary, Jane and Angie discuss more prices.

Grand Prix Circuit

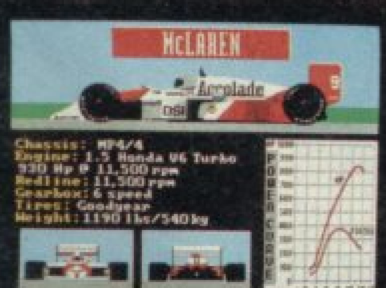
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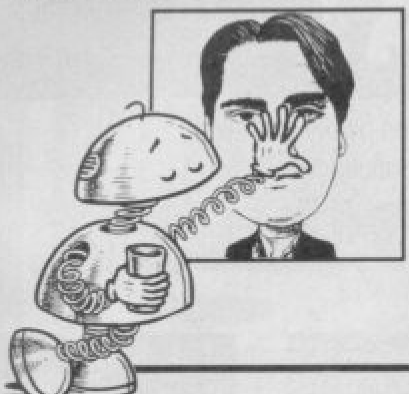
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GOT A PROBLEM WITH YOUR COUPÉ? YOU NEED...



ROBIN ALWAY SAM SURGEON

After a few months of doom and gloom in SAM Surgeon, prepare to cheer loudly, jump up and down vigorously and fashion a commerative tea towel because, at last, there's some good news to report! Good to the point of being pretty blooming brill news actually. As you've probably heard rumoured (not least in this column last issue), **Alan Miles** and **Bruce Gordon** are back with a new company set up to serve us SAM owners. They've risen phoenix-like from the ashes of **MGT** (dead poetic, eh?) with their new operation **SAM Computers Ltd**, or **SAMCO** for short. SAMCO's primary aims are to offer the ROM chip upgrade and updated versions of the Disk Operating System and Spectrum emulator for a fee to everyone who returns their warranty card. They've just recently taken on staff, got themselves some new premises, and reckon to be dealing with up to 100 orders a day. According to Alan Miles they're in a period of consolidation at the moment, though they should find time to visit the **CES show** (they'll be sharing a stand with **Enigma Variations**) and some all-formats computer shows.

There's also the possibility of new Coupé software and hardware, and SAM Computers generally looks like it's going to fly the Coupé flag and support the people who've already had the good sense to buy one. Send your warranty card to SAM Computers Ltd, 3 Clevedon Court, Uplands, Swansea SA2 0RG.

Possibly in order to finance all this activity a **SAM Coupé hotline** has also been set up. Ring 0898 299380 to get the latest Coupé info straight from the mouths of Al and Bruce themselves. As you'll know from ringing up Luscious Linda, Tempting Tina etc these calls are charged at 25p a minute cheap rate and 38p all the rest of the time.

Incidentally, latest rumour on the 'grapevine' (as we call it) is that unless a buyer's found for MGT and SAM very soon, Alan Miles and Bruce Gordon plan to buy it back! Watch this space or at least one very similar in next month's *YS*.

While I've only just managed to convert my best-ever Speccy program into SAM BASIC – 10 PRINT "ROB IS GURT LURSH" 20 GOTO 10 – other clever people are delving deep into the machine's psyche. **Martin Vale** for example has heaved loads of tips onto my desk and will let me share them with the rest of you as long as he's allowed, rather immaturely in my opinion, to say "Hi!! to Rob, Dave, Mr M etc" and point out that Martin Vale isn't his real name. And I was going to write him a cheque for a rather considerable amount of money too. Oh well, I suppose a badge will have to do. Martin's first tip is, apparently, "THE solution for SAM owners who are feeling a little SPEC-sick". Erm, take it away, Martin.

"Turn on your Speccy (put it in 48K mode if necessary) and type in SAVE "Speccyfont" CODE 15616,768. Put a blank tape into the tape recorder, press Record and ENTER. Now turn on your Coupé and type LOAD "Speccyfont" CODE UDG CHR$ 32. Voila! A Speccy character set on your SAM!! If you own a disk drive, load up the DOS and save it with SAVE "Speccyfont" CODE UDG CHR$ 32,768. To incorporate it into the emulator, load the "rom.bin" file with LOAD "rom.bin" CODE 65536. LOAD "Speccyfont" CODE 81152,768 and then resave it with SAVE "rom.bin" CODE 65536,16384. *Do not* do this on the system disk! Only use a back-up of the emulator. Make sure "Skelt.bin" is also saved.

And another tip – you will need to Load the "rom.bin" file to load Snapshots. What about copying this file onto your other disks using LOAD "rom.bin" CODE then SAVE "rom" CODE 65536,16384? Use your back up, the one with the new version of "rom.bin".

Thanks, Martin, you're a pal. As is the sender of this Speccy-compatibility thing, **Mark Rowbottom**...

"You need a Spectrum and Multiface to make it work. What you do is...

- Load game into Spectrum.
- Press Multiface button and save game.
- Switch on Coupé.
- Load Spectrum ROM program featured in issue 53 of *YS* into the Coupé.
- Load Multifaced program into the Coupé.

This should result in 80% of games working this way. Not Multiloads."

Thanks, and a badge goes to Mark. If you've got any hints, POKEs or cheats relating to any part of Coupé-owning send them to the address below.

The amount of Coupé fanzines and user groups seems to be rapidly expanding all the time like one of those big blobby monsters from a '50s SF movie. Here's a brief rundown of the latest I've heard about.

Contact is a SAM user group that sends its members a very professional-looking news sheet filled with up-to-the-minute info on the Coupé. They also have four separate disk-loads of public domain software and now offer an ST screen conversion service. For the sum of £1 per disk non-members can get any number of Degas Elite or Neochrome files converted to Mode 4 of the Coupé. Full details about Contact could be yours if you send an sae to 7 Queens Close, Old Windsor, Berkshire, SL4 2NU.

Colin Macdonald (40 Roundyhill, Monifieth, Dundee DD5 4RZ) is the editor of an on-screen disk mag called ***FRED***. It's published every month and is up to issue three – the contents of which includes reviews, news, and some tasty screenshots amongst other stuff. A veritable snip at £1 and well worth sampling.

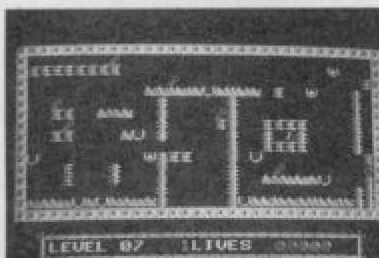
Another SAM user-group-cum-public-domain-library is **Fastline**. PD stocked on its shelves at the moment includes a Mandelbrot Set slideshow, Connect Four game as well as some piccies drawn on FLASH! Find out more about membership and the rest of PD available from 1 Ryelands Place, Kilgetty, Dyfed, Wales SA68 0UX.

And if you run a SAM user group, edit a fanzine or sit behind a desk telling people to be quiet in a Coupé PD library write in with full details for a gratuitous and completely free plug.

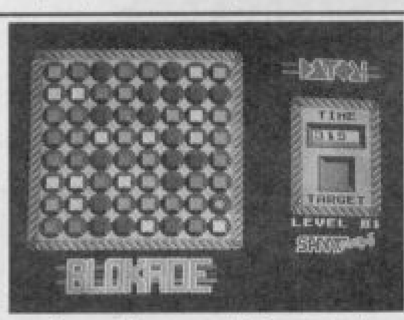
Yet again the foot of the page looms so it only remains for me to remind you to send any Coupé-related correspondence in to me, Robin Alway at SAM Surgeon, *Your Sinclair*, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW. See you next month and tally ho!

BLIMEY! MORE GAMES FOR THE SAM!!

Enigma Variations have just brought out a second product designed specifically for the SAM Coupé – and claim that it'll be but the first of many! ***Mind Games I*** is its name (presumably because they'll be cooking up some sequels a bit later on) and it's a pack containing four colourful puzzle games. Quite how colourful you won't be able to see here I'm afraid (after all, this is a black and white page) but they certainly look like they'll be considerably brighter than your average Speccy game, if not really up to the standards of *Defenders Of The Earth*.



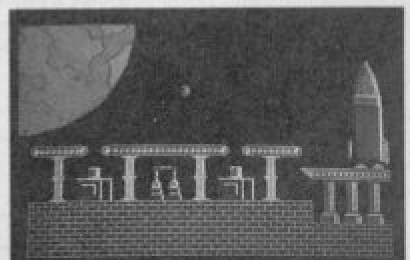
Hmm, writing captions for these is going to be tricky...



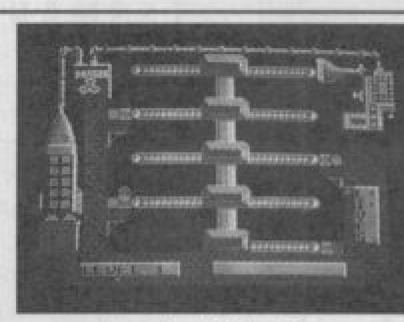
...since I know nothing at all...

Enigma promise the games are presented arcade-style, get progressively harder as you go through them and will make for 'great family entertainment'. The pack is available on tape and disk at £11.99 (£12.99 overseas) on tape and disk from SAM stockists or the usual Enigma address (13 North Park Road, Harrogate HG1 5PD).

That's by no means all though! Future plans include a graphic SAM adventure based on Enid Blyton's ***Famous Five*** books (!), a future sports simulation, an arcade adventure featuring the SAM character (who we thought we'd mercifully seen the last of) and a three-level parallax vertically-scrolling shoot-'em-up which they sound very proud of indeed. Watch out for more news and reviews from the Enigma camp over the next few months.



...about any of them. Ho hum. They certainly all look very...



...puzzley, don't they?



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WIN!!
A SNAZZY SAISHO VIDEO RECORDER OF YOUR VERY OWN!
PLUS!!
BUNDLES OF JAMES BOND VIDS! (IT'S TRUE!!)

But why?
We're having a bit of a celebration, that's why! You see, Domark are just about to release another of their fabby James Bond thingies – and it promises to be the best yet! It is (of course) *The Spy Who Loved Me*, and as you might expect it's packed with action – there're sharks and divers and speedboats and helicopters and hundreds of baddies and thousands of bullets and Lotus Esprits that turn into submarines (of course) and all sorts. In fact, it's just like the film, which most people would agree was one of the best ever (boring old Roger being the only hitch really).

So how does the game work? Well, it's based around all the driving bits from the film. You start off with a standard Esprit, but you can collect add-ons as you go along to turn it into something Q would be proud of. Eventually your car plunges off the end of a pier, zooms along underwater, takes out an enemy helicopter, turns into a jet-ski (*Are you sure about this bit? Ed*) and blows up the baddy base (or something). It's loads of fun basically, and ideal for basing a compo around. Which is just what we've done! (Hurrah!)

A video recorder, eh?
Yep. Just think of it sitting there, all slinky and black, playing your favourite vids over and over again. The particular one we've got in mind is called a Saisho VR 3400 and it's got infra-red remote control, a 28-day eight-programme timer and all sorts – just the thing to impress your friends enormously!

But that's not all! We've got five runners-up prizes too for the people we think made a pretty good attempt at the compo (but not quite good enough) – video cassettes of the actual film! It's a blooming miracle!





The name's ....

Meet me at ....

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So what's the catch?
Well, what you've got to do is prove to us that you're the sort of secret agenty person we're really looking for to receive this fabulous prize. We'll assume that you're pretty hot with the old Walther PPK, and we'll take it as read that you can handle a Lotus Esprit under pressure. You can also presumably manipulate your eyebrows in a suitable manner, and of course know how to convert your pencil sharpener into a compact helicopter for getting out of tricky situations. But what we really need to know is... how good are you with the girlies? (If you actually are a girlie, you'll just have to pretend.) As you can see in the pic you've just sidled up to an attractive babe (probably a baddie), waggled your eyebrows a bit and introduced yourself. But what next? It's no good trying the old favourites like "How do you like your eggs in the morning?" or "Ya dinna sweat much fer a fat lass". Good heavens, no. What we're looking for is the sort of dry, grammatically crisp yet entirely spontaneous line that'll slither into her ear and sit there, all warm and wet, until she can't help but jump into your passenger seat. So come up with something suitable, jot it down in the space provided, cut out the coupon and send it to *And If You Think That Was Impressive You Ought To Try Me With The Safety Catch Off* Compo, *Your Sinclair*, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW. And please could we have them by October 31st? Aw, go on.

RULES
- Enemy agents from Domark and Future Publishing attempting to infiltrate the compo will be shaken *and* stirred.
- This compo will self-destruct on October 31st, so get your entries in by then.
- Matt is not a patient man, so don't try entering into any correspondence with him. Unless you're female, blonde, 16-21 and like animals, that is.

MONTY PYTHON'S FLYING CIRCUS



Virgin Mastertronic
£9.99 cass
£14.99 disk

Andy Oh, wow! Groovy! Intro time, and what have I got to review? Only Virgin Mastertronic's fabby new *Monty Python's Flying Circus*! Yeah! (Hey, why don't I start off by 'quoting' loads of really, really funny bits from all those wacky and way-out Python sketches, eh? Here's one. "This parrot is dead." Ha ha ha! Creases me up every time. And how about "I'm a lumberjack and I'm okay, I sleep all night and I work all day"? Ppppfffffffff!! Hahahahaha! Oops! I think I just wet my boxer shorts! Ahem. Actually, there's a very good reason why I'm not going to start off like that – I hate Monty Python jokes.)





Eek! What's going on here? *(Damned if I know. Ed)*

Well, no, it's not so much the jokes that get my goat (I'm as much a fan as the next guy) – it's more the dribbling buffoons who insist on telling them. There's no escape, is there? There you are, sitting in front of your keyboard, or your lunch, or on the school coach (yup, the school coach never fails) and what do you hear? "Always look on the briiiigh..." Aaargh! SHUT *UP!!*

Okay, so you can call me a grumpy git if you want *(You grumpy git. Ed)* but show me *one more cretin* who sings about trees, high heels, suspenders and a bra and I'll show you a harpoon the size of which would make Orca the Killer Whale (God bless her soul) reconsider the dietary benefits of plancton. In other words, this review is going to be a Monty Python joke-free zone, okay? *(Grumble mumble... Reader's voice.)* Excellent.

Actually, the nice thing is, Virgin Mastertronic seem to agree with me too. True, when they first decided to do something with the licence they planned to base each of the four levels around a different side-splitting sketch. But then they thought "Nah, that'd be crap" and opted for something com... ahem, not quite the same at all. So what mind-blowingly innovative solution did they come up with? Well, follow me, Spec-chums, (in crocodile formation, please) and we'll find out. *(God, at last. Ed)*

Monty Python's Flying Circus is one deliciously surreal arcade adventure. No, it really is – a puzzler, a shoot-'em-up and a platform-and-ladders game all rolled into one. (It's not a million miles away from *Super Mario Brothers* in fact.) You play Mr DP Gumby (as seen on TV), a dim-witted tree-trunk of a Yorkshireman, all Jimmy-Hill chin and no brain. And, spookily enough, the reason he's got no brain is because it's burst and split into four pieces, each of which has subsequently scarpered off and hidden at the end of a level, thus thwarting his plans of becoming a high-flying chartered accountant. So he wants them back, with a little help from you. (Obviously it's not in the interests of the game to quietly whisper in his ear that the qualifications required for such a lauded vocation need not, of course, incorporate the possession of said organ, but there we go.)

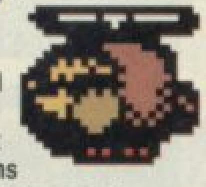
To manage this, you've got to dither your merry way across four horizantally-scrolling/vertically-flipping levels, each time retrieving a sufficient number of Spam cans (remember them?) to trade in for your quarter of cerebral slime. The only trouble is that most of them have been 'camouflaged' behind various pieces of cheese, and since there're absolutely tons of these pongy dairy produce thingimijigs stacked up across each level you've got a fair bit of blasting to do to get them all.

If you're thinking that's not exactly the world's most earth-shattering idea for a game, you may indeed be right – though in a spooky kind of way that's the basis for it's success. What we've got here is a tried-and-tested formula decorated right up to the Christmas tree fairy with all manner of wonderful Pythonesque graphics, all looking suitably surreal, and it works extremely well.

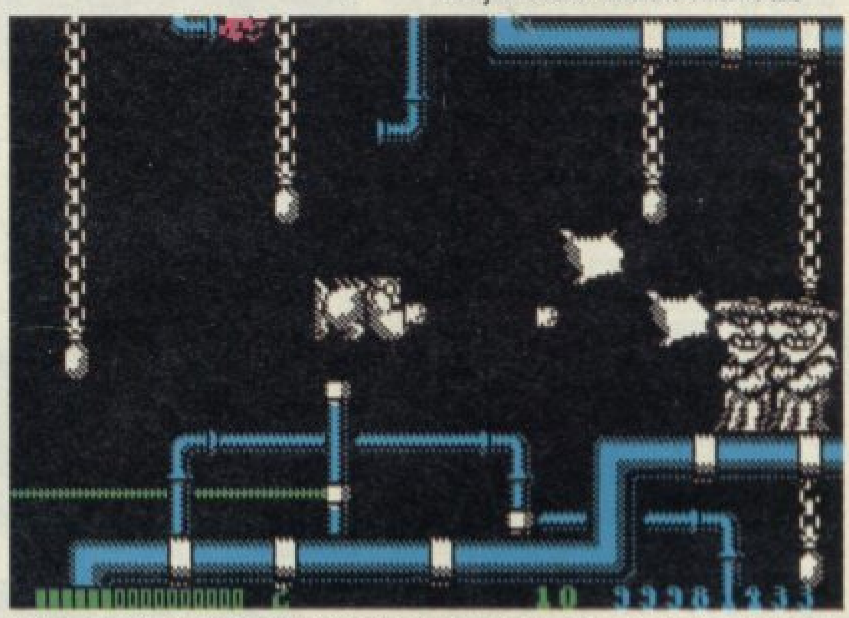
Remember all those little animated bits in the TV show? Well, that's what we've (sort of) got here. The bloke who thought them up was Terry Gilliam, a kind of 'Invisible Monty' (since turned

YOUR SINCLAIR MEGAGAME

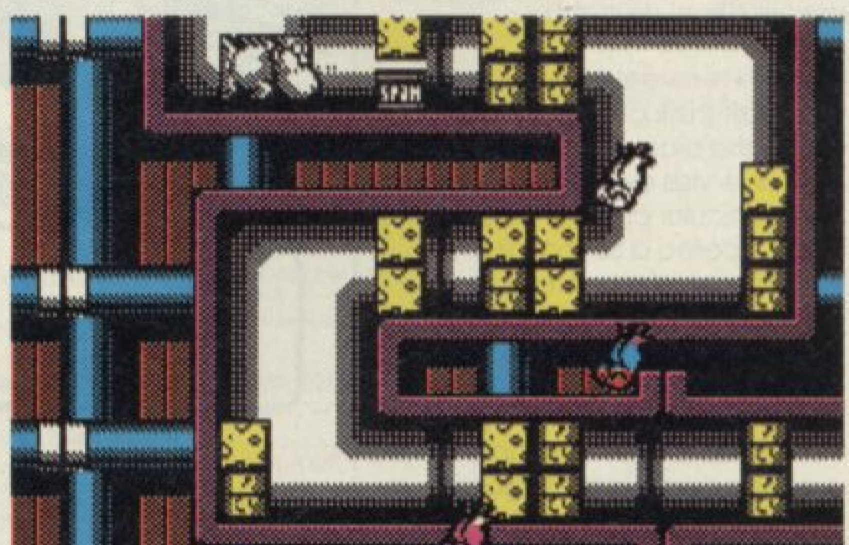
Hollywood director), who rarely appeared in the sketches but created this wonderful world of cartoon chaos out of cut-up photographs and stuff which they then sort of dropped in among the live action bits. It's from these that the look of the game takes its visual cue, though the actual gameplay itself has, in the main, years of 'heritage' behind it. This won't be the first time you've had to make your way through subterranean tubes and tunnels, as you do in Level One, for instance, or defy death by dodging pistons and scrambling along conveyor belts as in Level Four.



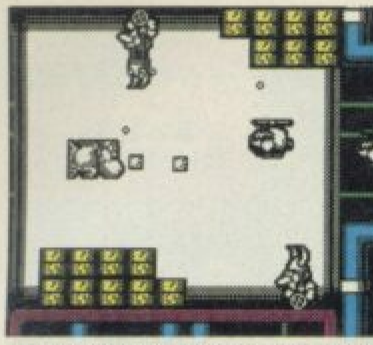
This familiarity isn't a problem though – what they've done is come up with a structure that works well as a game in its own right, and then tweaked and modified it enough to fit in all the specific Python-ish bits. And very weird the result is too. Take Gumby for instance – one minute he's sporting a tasteful line in hanky-on-head high fashion, the next the body of a fish! And the villains are



Oh, you thing that's funny, do you? Right, eat goldfish, suckas!



I've found one! I've found one! (Ho hum, only 1,273 to go!)



If only I'd worked out how to get rid of those darn Vikings...

equally bizarre, ranging from falling weights, Eric the half-a-bees and Silly Walk Ministers to pointing fingers, Keep Left signs that zoom up-screen, flying hamsters, the lot. You never know what's coming next!

Most of the baddies you can simply avoid (although blasting them in true diplomatic fashion can often ease matters), but others, like the policeman on his bicycle or the Spanish Inquistion blokey (both of whom spit out rounds of pea-sized bullets at you) definitely need to be taken out, if only to see what handy little energy icons they leave in their wake.



It's not all blasting fun though. There are squillions of little puzzles to squelch your grey matter around as you go along, from the cheese identification protection system you encounter at the beginning of the game to sussing out how best to release a can of Spam you can't get to without it dropping off the bottom of the screen. Remember what order you need to blitz particular cheese blocks and you may get the odd bonus giveaway object (whatever that may be) hidden within too!

All of which brings us to, erm, somewhere near the end I think. What haven't I mentioned yet? Well, the speed's fine and dandy, and I think I've already said the quality of the graphics is spot on as well – crisp and colourful, this is Speccyvision at its best. The level of invention (not least visually) is excellent as well.

However, I do have one small reservation, and that's the fact it seemed to me slightly arbitary how many times you get hit by bullets, other baddies and so on before you get killed. Me, I like things to be like real life (ie one shot and you're dead) – I'm not into this 'you can take so many hits before you keel over' stuff at all. You just end up not giving a fig about anything, la dee da, waddle bounce, cruising your way through everything paying not very much attention at all really when suddenly someone (somewhere) some*how* decides they've inflicted one too many 'pings' upon you and that's your mortail coil shuffled off well and good, matey. (At which point your head will spring up off its human/fish/bird/etc body in rather a bizarre fashion.) No. I like to know more where I stand, mortality-wise.

Still, in my book that's not enough to deprive *Monty* of that oh-so-coveted badge of Megagame fame. It's definitely a tip-top stomper, and, as my mother always told me, you've always got to look on the bright si...

(Damn.)

finalverdict

LIFE EXPECTANCY	GRAPHICS	ADDICTIVENESS
84°	92°	87°

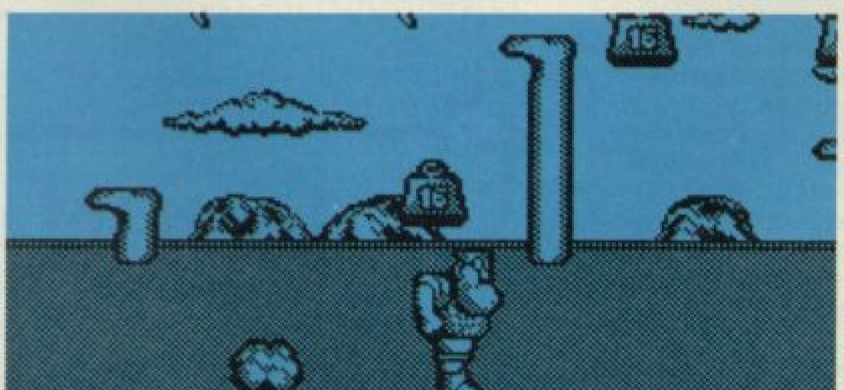
DIAGNOSIS

A rather spooky arcade adventure with a definite weird French feel to it – except it's British! Spiffing!

INSTANT APPEAL 93°

80 60 40 20

90°



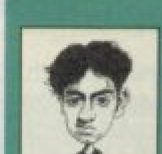
Look out, Gumby!! A 16-ton weight's about to drop on your bonce! (Oh well, won't do the slightest bit of damage anyway.)

JOYSTICK JUGGLERS

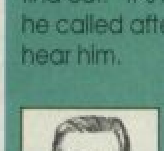
Feeling a bit bored and rather short of ideas, we decided (for no rational reason whatsoever) to hold a *YS* Editorial Office 'Sound Effects Contest'. And guess what? The Jugglers were all invited to take part...



Matt Bielby Would-be car-owner Matt seemed to be ready for us. Smiling smugly, he boasted, "You'll never get this!" He began scraping his fingernails rapidly up and down his trousers, making a 'gushing' sound with his mouth and occasionally spitting. Then, suddenly, he stopped and let out a high-pitched scream. "That's it," he said, and folded his arms. We weren't impressed, and suggested that it was probably someone cleaning their teeth and suddenly noticing that there was a spider in the bath. "Aw!" he cried, and ran off.



Rich Pelley The *YS* heart-throb thought for a while, and then started slapping the table rhythmically with a large book. After a few minutes he began tearing and screwing up pieces of paper, and crushing plastic cups under his feet. He introduced other noises by snapping ice-lolly sticks and hitting a drink can with a biro. What was he up to? We didn't hang around to find out. "It's my fave 'Acid' track," he called after us, but we didn't hear him.



Andy Ide A wide grin spread across Andy's face. He sat on the floor with his legs crossed and closed his eyes. At first he didn't seem to be making any noise at all, but eventually we managed to make out a quiet rustling noise accompanied by a low hum. This got louder and louder for a while, showing no signs of stopping. Baffled, we gave up. "It's a flower. Growing," he revealed, and lit a joss-stick. We moved hastily on.



David Wilson "Make a sound-effect, David," we suggested, but he didn't seem to understand. "Huh?" he riposted. "You know, a noise. Make one." "Huh?" Still no joy. Perhaps a simpler approach was called for. "Pretend you're something, and copy the sound it makes," we explained patiently. "Huh?" "Er, David, are you okay?" "Huh?" "David?" "Huh?" "What's the matter?" "I'm doing what you said!? Don't you get it?" We were relieved, but at the same time rather baffled. "It's me trying to start the Herald on a cold day!" Er, right, David.



Jonathan Davies Finally, and with a certain reluctance, we approached Jonathan. He took a deep breath, then made a series of clicking sounds, punctuated by unconvincing explosions and 'beeow' noises. After approximately 30 seconds his entry was terminated by a loud and decidedly unprintable swear-word, a faint click and then silence. We had a fairly clear idea, but felt we ought to humour him. "It was me trying to play a computer game," he explained predictably. We decided to make the effort to come up with something better next month.

SCORES

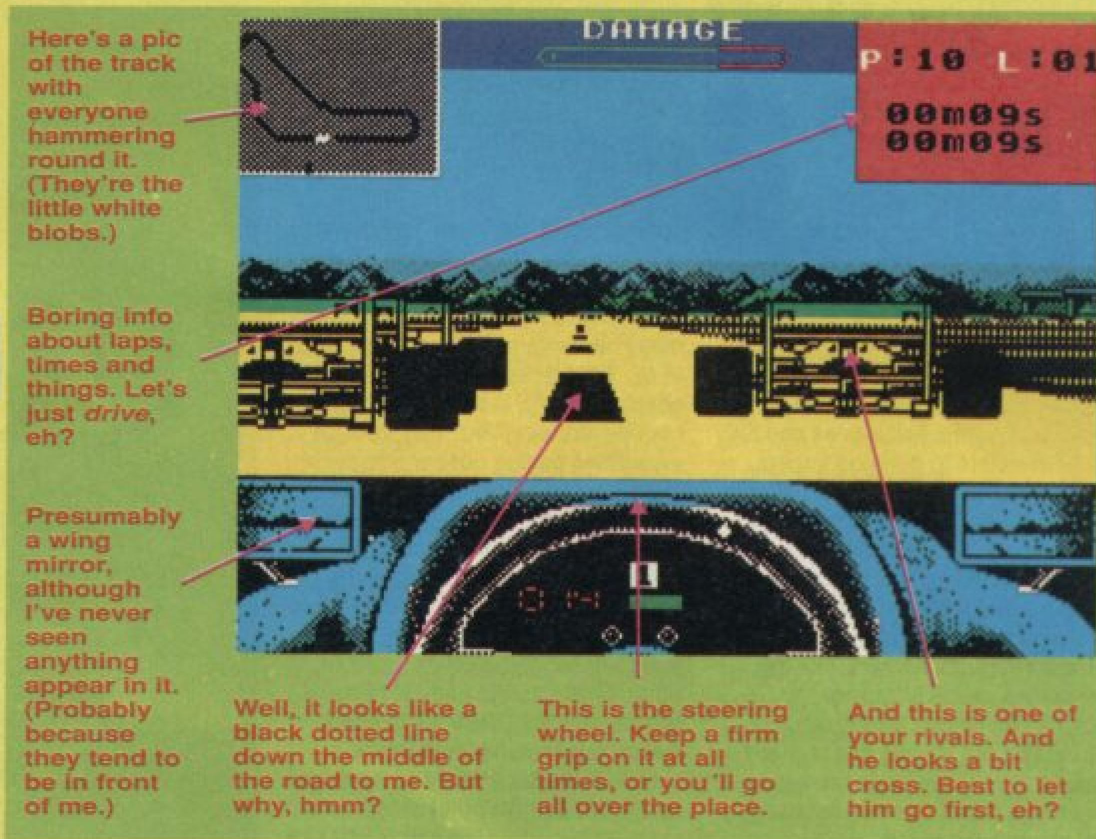
90° – 100° Getting up to fever temperature! Miss a game that's this red-hot and you'll get the blues – we guarantee it! Any game that rates an overall score of 90 or above gets the esteemed *YS* Megagame rating! It's a happening piece of software!
80° – 89° PDG! (ie Pretty Damn Good!) A game well worth digging deep into the old dosh bucket for!
70° – 79° A very enjoyable game, but might not be of lasting appeal to everybody.
60° – 69° A few niggles. Lacking in certain areas. Think before you buy!
50° – 59° Pretty average. Very average in fact. Actually, it's a bit crap.
40° – 49° Um, below average (believe it or not).
30° – 39° So sick it's due to be hospitalized.
20° – 29° Very poorly indeed.
10° – 19° Critical – not expected to last the night.
0° – 9° Clinically dead.

Accolade
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Jonathan Have you ever tried playing a driving game while eating an ice lolly? It's not at all easy, I can tell you. Half the time you get so involved with the lolly's hidden subtleties that you completely forget to keep your eyes on the road, and the other half of the time you get so carried away with steering the car that you end up with molten Cornish Strawberry Mivvi streaming down your arm. Both situations are equally dangerous and undesirable, and I've yet to find a way round the problem.

You're probably wondering why the screenshots of *Grand Prix Circuit* look so familiar. There are two reasons for this. Firstly, it's a driving game, and hence looks pretty much like every other driving game which has ever come out, and, secondly, it's a sort of sequel to *The Cycles* which Jackie reviewed back in the August issue. Both games are based around the same framework, with the simple substitution of cars for bikes in this one.



GRAND PRIX CIRCUIT

What this means is that you've got to wade through screens of the same options before you can start the game, choosing whether you want a practice race, a real race or the whole racing season, what sort of car you'd like to drive and where you'd like to drive it. Having done that you'll find yourself in a straightforward 3D road-comin'-at-ya driving game with lots of other cars to race against. What you actually have to do from then on depends on which difficulty level you choose, with steering, accelerator and brakes as the bare minimum, and manual gears as a luxury option on higher levels.

So which should you choose (out of *Cycles* and *Prix*)? Well, it's not actually a simple case of whether you prefer bikes or cars. And here's why...

When Jackie reviewed *The Cycles* she grumbled about it rather a lot, giving it a savagely low mark. What got up her nose most was the wobbly steering system which sent her swerving all over the road every time she tried to go round a corner. At first we thought this was due to the old problem of her legs not reaching the ground properly, but even after lowering the seat as much as possible, and sellotaping broom-handles to her legs to extend them a bit, she still had trouble keeping in a straight line. This problem has been almost entirely cleared up in *Prix*. As well as a much tamer response to your joystick waggling there's also a little blob on the steering wheel to let you know what position it's in – all you've got to do is centre it to get the car going in a straight line. The graphics have been jazzed up a bit too, although a few glitches occasionally appear on the road.



Er, lads... hang on a minute! Look, it's not funny any more. Lads?

So why doesn't it get the massive mega-mark Accolade were probably hoping for? Well, for a start there's your car. It's not really as 'hot' as it might have been. It'll only do about 110mph flat out, and it takes years to get up to even that. Then there's the general 'easiness' of it all. Even I, undisputed holder of the Crap Games Player of the Year title, managed to win practically every race I entered, even on the higher levels.

Apart from that, though, *Grand Prix Circuit* is a huge improvement over *The Cycles* and one of the best straight racing games around (but not such good news compared with more arcadey driving games). It's got a pleasantly scrolling road, responsive controls and plenty of raceability. Worth a look. Probably.



Good choice of sponsor, that. Now they just need to get those wheels sorted out.

finalverdict

LIFE EXPECTANCY	GRAPHICS	ADDICTIVENESS
79°	68°	80°

DIAGNOSIS
A perfectly respectable racing game. One to get if you like that sort of thing.

INSTANT APPEAL 69°

80 60 40 20

73°



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Letters

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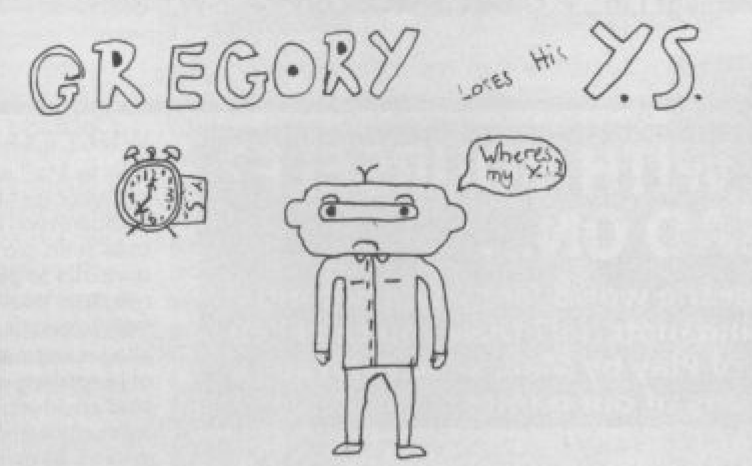
Here we are again. And I'm in the worst mood I've ever been in in my whole life. I'm in such a bad mood I think I'm going to have to smash something up. I know, I'll ask Andy if I can borrow his Walkman for a minute. (Sound of Andy passing Walkman over followed by sound of Walkman being smashed into tiny pieces.) There, that's better. Tension gone. Time for you lot.

THE ENGINES CANNA TAKE IT

T'other day I was reading the Trainspotter bit in ish 55 and saw your announcement that ships travel faster than the speed of light in *Buck Rogers* and *Star Trek*. I just thought I'd clarify things a bit. First off, in *Buck Rogers* they use the rather boring 'stargate'. In *Star Trek*, however, a rather more complex method is used. Taking the Enterprise class NCC17Q1, its engines generate a localised space warp which holds the contents of the warp bubble in a version of this universe which is called warp space. Warp space is a kind of shadowy version of normal space – most massive objects (planets, stars) affect warp space. Singularities (black holes etc) actually exist there. The major difference between normal space and warp space is that in warp space there's no 'cosmic speed limit'. A ship in warp drive can go as fast as you like – the only limitation is the structural strength of a ship. The Enterprise can cope with up to warp 12, but her engines only provide a maximum of warp eight (for ten hours).
Duncan Corps
Farnborough, Hampshire

What do you mean "The rather boring stargate"? What's so boring about stargates? I personally find them quite fascinating – and far more functionable than crap old warp drives. You just head into them and 'zammo', out you come into another sector of space. If you want to get into warp space you firstly have to have a ten minute argument with Scotty about whether the Dilithium crystals are going to work or whether the engines can or canna take the strain. What a hassle. **Ed.**

DOODLEBUGS





Oh no! The *YS* Doodlebugs pile (massive though it is) turned up only slightly crap and unfunny cartoonettes this month. Still, here are the best of a rather disappointing bunch – the rather tragic *Gregory Loses His YS* from **Geoffrey Stewart** of Cirencester, Glos, and the totally unfunny *Escape From The Planet Of The YS Joystick Jugglers* by **Robin Stewart** of the same address (so he's probably his brother or something), which only has one redeeming feature – it's not based on *Batman*, *The Untouchables* or (yawn) the *Teenage Mutant Hero Turtles*.

Come on, everybody! Surely you can do better than these?! (Winning three games has never been so easy!) Send your scribblings (in black ink only please) to Doodlebugs, *Your Sinclair*, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2AP.



SECRET DESIRES

Tell Meryl Streep and Meg Ryan (ish 56) that I won't ignore them, and tell Dominic Brookman's sister that even if the covers are lurid they couldn't possibly exploit my secret desires. Oh, and tell Martin Van Spanje that Dutch undies look pretty uncomfortable – and that I like acid on my french fries. I don't know... these Dutch, hopeless... hopeless.
Noel 'Gibble Bug' Byrne
Balsall Common, Coventry

Yes, their pervy pants, their windmills and their silly tasteless cheeses. Mind you, there are several brilliant things about Holland too – such as, er... Well, there aren't any mountains for a start, so there are no avalanche problems. And, er, well, there are the dykes of course – not that dykes are that brilliant really. Um, brilliant things about Holland, er... I've run out actually. **Ed.**

GOT A NEW MOTOR

Just bought the August ish and I liked the article on cars (page six). Here are my thoughts on the matter. Firstly, how to annoy a Porsche driver. I bought an Escort RS Turbo, got it 're-chipped' (ie got the turbo boosted by changing the engine management chip and making a few modifications). I now leave Porsche drivers (a contradiction in terms) wallowing in the dust at traffic lights. If you really want to suss them out, buy a second-hand Sierra Cosworth (at 220 BHP, the most powerful car on the road – power steering, no turbo lag... paradise).

Onto the Triumph Herald – another name for 'rust'. (How's yer chassis, Davey?) As regards why Volvo Estates have all-day lights – it's law (well, in Sweden it is). In Britain it just says "Watch out, there's a green-wellied prat about". Vauxhall Cavaliers – I must say that I've got a lot more respect for these since I saw one beat two BMW M3's at Thruxton last Bank Holiday – but, having said that, it's still a Vauxhall. Ford Cortinas are prone to rear suspension problems due to the misuse of the back seat when parked up 'Lover's Lane'. The Mk1 and Mk2 are okay, but you can forget the Mk3 – buy a Capri instead and put a three-

litre Granada engine in it.

Minis, then. Mock ye not. An okay little car which can be made, relatively inexpensively, to move very quickly. Ideal, so long as you don't mind being eyeball-to-eyeball with lorry wheels. I agree about the Allegro – Italian for fast??? What a joke. You forgot about the Maxi though. The Renault Five – what's yours called? "A *&%^*&$" probably, when it doesn't start from hot or cold (secret is to use full choke and *not* to put your foot on the accelerator). A bit tinny, but not a bad motor. I could go on all day, but you probably haven't got enough room.
Don Griffith
Hammersmith, London

David's Herald chassis is in perfect nick, thank you very much. (It's all the other bits that are crap.) **Ed.**

BLIMEY – HE'S BACK

You may groan and curse, but I am writing again. Why? Well, first of all I would like to thank Mr PJ Breolin for his support and encouragement which I greatly value. It's nice to know that there is someone out there who thinks as I do. Also I would like to answer some of Matthew Zavian's questions... a) "Who am I?" I'm a schoolboy from Dorset. My hobbies are writing essays and computer programs, and drawing cartoons. I'm a vegetarian and a reviewer and head of the tips department on a fanzine called *Frisbee User*. I own a 48K Spectrum and have access to about 20 Beebs. And b) oh – there isn't another one, so that rounds off the letter. I make one final plea – please stop the swearing!
Sam Jeffreys
Poole, Dorset

Well, well, well. I didn't think I'd be hearing from you again. Hmm, you've lost that fanatical tone you had a few issues ago, so well done. But about this swearing accusation – what on earth are you on about? You must have led a rather sheltered life if you think words like "blooming" and "blinking" are rude. If you were complaining about sexual innuendo then I'd be with you (but I still wouldn't necessarily agree). **Ed.**

JOB DESCRIPTIONS

Could I possibly have any information on jobs and what each person does, because I think *Your Sinclair* is the best Spectrum magazine – and I want a job in journalism.
Chris Fagan
Runcorn, Cheshire

Well, this differs from magazine to magazine, but I'll clue you up on the Your Sinclair approach...
The Editor *This post involves gossiping on the telephone a lot – the more time you spend doing this, the better an Editor you are. I'm actually very good at it and score an A+.*
The Art Editor *You have to try to remove all the words from the magazine and replace them with pictures and artwork. The Editor (when he's not on the phone) has to try and stop you.*
The Production Editor *You have to be good at woodwork, because the YS shed is in a constant state of disrepair – and one of your duties is to stop leaks. You also have to be a sex machine.*
The Staff Writer *You have to do everything that no-one else can be bothered to do (probably why we're still looking for one – there you go).* **Ed.**

CUNNING CODE

Where shall I *start*? It was a very *starry* night, my room was lit up by *starlight* and I was *staring* at a *stark* screen with my trusty pet, *Starboard* the *starling*. (I call him that 'cos he leans to the right.) I was bored, what should I do? Should I play Starion or *Starstrike* – or should I go for *stardom* and *startle* a few of my friends? All that deep thinking made me *starve*, so I went to hunt the fridge. Nothing alas, only a dead *starfish* – my stupid brother had put it in there along with a *starched* shirt (strange, my bro).
R Stevens
Saundersfoot, Dyfed
PS You're a *star*.

I've got a sneaking suspicion that you're hinting at something, but I can't for the life of me work out what it is. Andy says it's totally obvious, but won't let me in on the secret. Damn. Right, it's obviously some sort of a code – some of the letters are written in a different style of text to the others. What I'll do is take the letters immediately following the italics and stitch them together. Maybe they'll make some sort of message. Here goes. 'TRLKBLISDTFC'. Oh dear, that seems to be an anagram, and I'm no good at anagrams. Sorry. **Ed.**

STAR LETTER

AUSSIE BLUES

Last month I went on holiday to Australia. On the plane I was so bored and depressed because, yes, I had forgotten to take my *YS*. Then my great old mum pulled something out of her bag. It was a copy of *YS*. I was really happy until I saw which one it was, because it was an old one I'd read before. Still, *YS* is so brilliant I read it again (and again). When I finally got to my hotel room down under I unpacked and, lo and behold, what was in it? The latest issue of *YS*. The one I thought I'd forgotten. So I settled down on my bed and read it from cover to cover.
Angela Jackson
Stamford, Lincs

Once you'd finished it, I'll hazard a guess that the rest of the holiday was a bit of an anti-climax. Ooh, and how's about telling us what's happening in Neighbours? (Or I won't send you your three games.) **Ed.**

RACCOONSTICK

I am writing to you to see if you could help me. I'm a 15-year-old schoolboy and I am now starting my GCSE Technology course. In the section I have chosen I am required to design something to help me in one of my favourite hobbies. I have chosen to design a computer joystick, and I was wondering if you could give me any information you have on what you would consider the perfect joystick (design, size, weight).
Dean Garnham
Lowestoft, Suffolk

I'll give it my best shot. Well, when you're designing something from scratch you have to ask yourself what features are currently unavailable from other manufacturers. It springs to mind that there are no joysticks in the shape of raccoons, and I absolutely love raccoons, so let's take it from there. A raccoon-shaped joystick then. Right – the tail could be the shaft, and you could make the eyes and ears into tiny fire buttons. Little suction cups could go under the feet so it would adhere to a table-top. You wouldn't want to spoil the aesthetics with a clumsy cable though, so it would need to be an infra-red jobbie. Design finished, now for a snappy name. Er, how about 'The Disney Raccoontroller'? A bit naff, I know, but stick on a couple of TM's and it'd probably be a winner. **Ed.**

SHE'S MAD

Hello, I'm an English *YS* fan and I have to protest. How dare Kevin Berthier insult the most talented, fantastic, wonderful, amazing, luscious, gorgeous girl in the entire universe, Vanessa Paradis?!! It's a disgrace. Kevin doesn't think that the French are weird, but manages to insult the most good-looking girl ever, who happens to be French! With regard to the French being weird, I tend to agree with you and Dunc. They are weird. (Except Vanessa Paradis, of course.)
Antony
Torquay, Devon

While I agree that Vanessa is something of a babe, I have to disagree with you on the not-being-weird front. Did you know that she wears her shoes on the wrong feet? It's a true 'pop fact'. She claims that it's because her big toes splay out too far, and she's trying to force them back into a more sensible position. I personally fall into the 'she's a bit slippy in the head' camp. Gorgeous, but bonkers. **Ed.**

SWOON KING

It seems that you, Mr Bielby, have lost your swooning powers. So I, Dr Anthony 'He Who Marcus Berkmann Keeps Calling The Goat And If He Does Again I'll Kick Him In The Bum' Whitaker, aged 17, am here to offer help (if you give me the Star Letter).
1) Wear some really groovy shades and use a personal stereo. (And I don't mean crappy Oxfam jobbies!)
2) Should you speak to a girl who used to "wibble at the knees" when she saw you, put a medium-frequency voice on.
3) If you want, you could do a dance

WONDERFUL WORLD OF SPECCY

Which country has never made it into the Wonderful World Of Speccy column? Germany, that's who. We thought it was about time this was rectified, so here goes.

WHOOPS

Hello, my name's Nicholas Ridley, and in my opinion the Germans are nothing short of a bunch of...
(Whoops, wrong letter. Ed)

THE REAL ONE

I live in West Germany. Best of luck, think of anything worse. Yeah, they don't sell *YS* over here – you ought to be ashamed of yourselves. I know my writing's very bad, but I would have typed it (the letter) but my sister put a disk in our Amiga and it got stuck! Even worse she got a knife to put in the disk drive now the computer is bust (and she wants to be a doctor). I have a Speky or else I wouldn't have bought the mag! My Speky is a 48K so it's quite crap to tell the truth. If anybody has a 128K which I could buy for 20 pounds (or less if possible) write now. I haven't read *YS* for a long time so sorry. But I went over to my friend's house and thought they were crap. When I went to England I bought myself one and ever since my life hasn't been the same cos now I have £1.70 less in my pocket. Let me introduce myself, oh what can I say apart from um that my name is Thomas Courth.
Thomas Courth
Bergishgladbach, W Germany

I think your sister's going to make a fine doctor – she just needs a bit more practice, that's all. I'll send you our office +3 (which has got a knife stuck in the disk drive as well). If your sister can't remove it you'll sort of have a 'matching pair', which can be used as book-ends or something. **Ed.**

TRAINSPOTTER AWARDS



RELATIVELY SPEAKING

I hereby claim a Trainspotter for an error of omission in Professor 'Joplin The Strippet Operator' PhD's letter in ish 55. He explained the practical but not theoretical reason that objects cannot pass the speed of light. At high speed time slows down. Imagine you are in a spaceship travelling at high speeds. To measure the distance you have left to travel you send a pulse of light towards your destination and time its return. As time has slowed down it takes a less number of seconds to return. As the speed of light is constant, the distance must have shortened. As speed = distance/time your speed would be less than if the distance had remained constant. Of course, the faster you travel, the slower time becomes, the less the distance is and the slower your speed than if the distance was constant. Therefore the speed of light can never be reached.

Mary 'Genius' Knapp
Kingston, Lewes

Time for a YS 'experiment' I think. We'll prove this once and for all. I'm holding a wet bar of soap, and what I'm going to do is throw it at Andy's head. If it gets tangled up in his hair we'll say that the speed of light can never be attained. If, however, it bounces off then we'll say that there is no restriction on an object's velocity and that Einstein got it all wrong. I'm going to throw it now. (Sound of Andy falling onto the floor as heavy bar of soap ricochets off his bonce and goes flying through the shed's open door.) Ha ha! Einstein was crap and you don't get a Trainspotter. **Ed.**

PRAT

I claim a Trainspotter for noticing a mistake in the July ish. In the Wonderful World Of Speccy column, Ingio Rutten's letter said "It would be very mice..." and in Padlo Marek's letter it said "Thank you very moch..." and in Romeo Nichifor's letter it said "Thunks..." Is it because they can't translate, because you can't translate or was it just a printing error?

Michael Molloy
Co Armagh, N Ireland

Clot! They spelt them wrong – not me or the printers. It's one of the reasons they ended up in Wonderful World Of Speccy. You certainly can't have a Trainspotter. **Ed.**

as you walked down the big streets.
4) If it's cold wear flares of bright colours – and if it's hot you have the option of wearing bermudas.

Anthony *('The Goat'. Ed)* Whitaker
Thatcham, Berkshire
PS What's Kati Hamza really like?

Kati Hamza is currently in a coma because, clad in bermuda shorts (and wearing shades), I boogied up to her with my Walkman hissing and spoke to her in a medium-frequency voice. My swooning powers have returned, but if you think you're getting the Star Letter you can bally well think again. **Ed.**

THE TALL BLOKE

You lot do my head in, you really do. "The tall bloke out of De La Soul", or Posdnuos to give him his correct name, is able to do any line that you may care to give him. "I even had the ish which had *Jet Set Willy* in you know" is the kind of thing that this guy mumbles in his sleep. He could turn the Oxford Dictionary into a rap, so may I suggest that next time you get any 'short' lines like the one above, don't phone Pos, as I'm sure he has much better things to do than recite such little triflings.

The Fantastic Flying Funk
Hove
Sussex

Pah! Pos is a crap rapper in comparison to me, and if I can't rap something then neither can he. **Ed.**

CLOGS CLOGS CLOGS

You're lucky the Dutch football team decided not to wear clogs in the World Cup match against England. They would have hammered Mr Lineker and his 'gang'. (Oh boy, now I'm doing it myself.)

Martin Van Spanje
Heemstede, Clogland

Yippee! It's official! A Dutchman has actually used the word 'clogs' in reference to his own country. Oh, and by the way, even if your lads had worn them it wouldn't have made any difference, because our boys would have countered by wrapping their feet in the newspaper from the previous night's take-away fish, chips and acid. **Ed.**

SMALL PRINT

At least 90% of Kiwi and Aussie readers have as much intelligence as your average cucumber.
Brian Cossey
Whangarei, New Zealand
You're going to be popular. **Ed.**

Is Andy really a hippy? I hope so, coz I am.
Chris Delahunty
Thetford, Norfolk
Andy is a mega-hippy. His flares are so massive that he's been hired by Bath council as a roadsweeper. **Ed.**

Gis a job. I'll clean the toilets and lift Jack onto a chair when she needs to sit down (think of the money you'll save on mountain-climbing equipment).
Chris Delahunty
Thetford, Norfolk
You again? Anyway, Jack doesn't need mountain-climbing equipment – she's got a Ken and Barbie jet-pack. **Ed.**

Using anagrams, Andy can make a "Ten Day Sound". He must eat too many beans.
Declan Duke
Co Dublin, Ireland
Hippies eat nothing but beans. And anyway, you've got the wrong Andy. It's Andy Ounsted, not Ide. Idiot. **Ed.**

Bum. So there you have it.
Bob Marley's Nose
Milton Keynes
I've already got one. **Ed.**

If you notice any sexual innuendo in this letter then WHIP IT OUT immediately!
The Snake Boy
Bromley, Kent
I didn't notice any. Sam Jeffreys probably did though. **Ed.**

Activision are crap.
Dev Gunputrao
Retford, Notts
They certainly have their moments. **Ed.**

It measures 3.5 on the Richard Scale. Yoiks! (R-r-r-rumble.)
David 'Fartpants' Maher
Harlow, Essex
Yes, but it wasn't a Ten Day Sound. **Ed.**

KINDLY LEAVE THE STAGE

Things get from bad to worse, they really do. **Crazy Robin** of **Stevenage** has hit an all-time low with this absolutely pathetic and laugh-free 'gag'. Better get it over and done with I suppose.

Q: What do you get if you fall in the sea?
A: Wet.

Have your sides split? Thought not. But just think – he actually gets a badge for that. Incredible. Think how easy it is for you to win a badge too. All jokes to KLTS at the usual address.

BUD PICO'S



HOW TO DO IT!

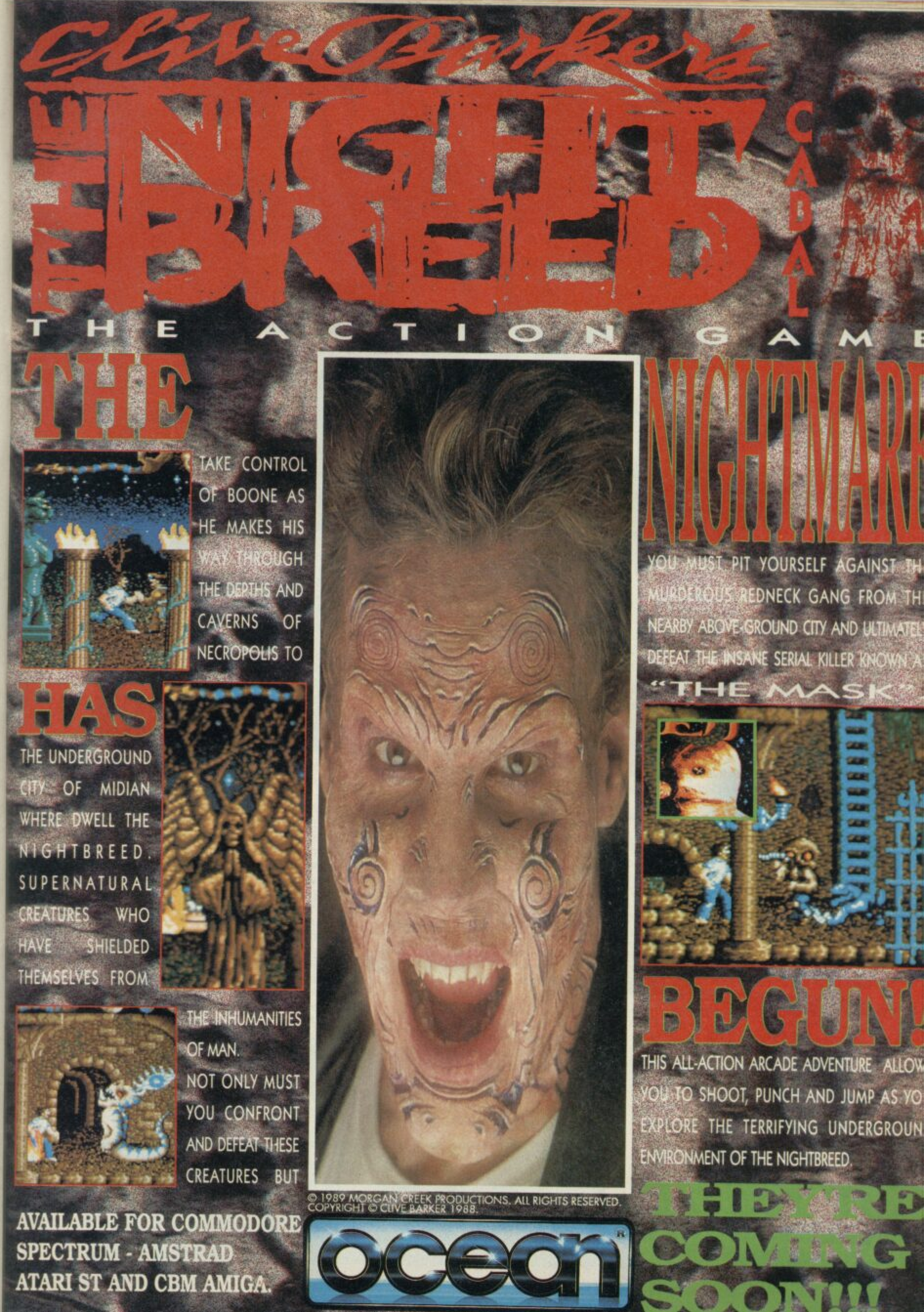
Heeeeeeeere's Bud!

Dear Bud
I was upset to read in your last column about the Rice Krispies inner bag idea. Why? Because I thought of one first! I know it's not the winning but the 'taking part' that counts but... Oh well, here it is.
To conserve water and also keep your hair in tip-top condition, place lots of open inner bags in your garden. These handy receptacles will trap water which you can then use to wash your hair with. Rain water is very rich in minerals and an ideal hair-washing medium.
Yours 'inner baggily'
J Thorpe, Bridlington

Brilliant! What do you think, readers? Have you got a better inner bag idea? Drop me a line marked 'Better Inner Bag Ideas'.

Dear Bud
I've always longed for the opportunity to send you a handy household tip or something, and now I can. You see, on a recent visit to Spain I spent my time eating Los Krispies De Arroz with rather horrid sterilised milk. This milk came in durable plastic bottles. Well, my grandad told me that in fact these bottles were indestructible and that the more breakfast we eat cereal-wise the more of these bottles will start filling up the world. In a few years the whole world will be ankle-deep in sterilised milk bottles. Think of the consequences environment-wise as the oceans fill with bottles and, well, how can mankind survive submerged in plastic bottles!? How could anyone be so dumb to make these bottles? Please advise me, Bud – I'm losing sleep.
Yours very worriedly
Alan, Durham

You're absolutely right – this is a problem more in my mum's field of specialisation. Still, I'll send it straight to her convalescent home, so stay tuned for the reply, Alan! By the way, can any Spanish readers shed any light on the frighteningly indestructible Spanish sterilised milk bottle saga? Drop me a line at Frighteningly Indestructible Spanish Sterilised Milk Bottle Saga at the usual address. 'Til next month!



Clive Barker's
THE NIGHT BREED
CABAL
THE ACTION GAME
THE
TAKE CONTROL OF BOONE AS HE MAKES HIS WAY THROUGH THE DEPTHS AND CAVERNS OF NECROPOLIS TO
HAS
THE UNDERGROUND CITY OF MIDIAN WHERE DWELL THE NIGHTBREED. SUPERNATURAL CREATURES WHO HAVE SHIELDED THEMSELVES FROM THE INHUMANITIES OF MAN.
NOT ONLY MUST YOU CONFRONT AND DEFEAT THESE CREATURES BUT
NIGHTMAR
YOU MUST PIT YOURSELF AGAINST TH
MURDEROUS REDNECK GANG FROM THE
NEARBY ABOVE-GROUND CITY AND ULTIMATEL
DEFEAT THE INSANE SERIAL KILLER KNOWN A
"THE MASK"
BEGUN!
THIS ALL-ACTION ARCADE ADVENTURE ALLOW
YOU TO SHOOT, PUNCH AND JUMP AS YO
EXPLORE THE TERRIFYING UNDERGROUN
ENVIRONMENT OF THE NIGHTBREED.
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AVAILABLE FOR COMMODORE
SPECTRUM - AMSTRAD
ATARI ST AND CBM AMIGA.
ocean
THEYRE COMING SOON!!!



THE COMPLETE YS GUIDE TO FLIGHT SIMS

Tiger Moth pic care of FLYPAST MAGAZINE

Oh cripes. Whose idea was this? Couldn't we do it on something else? Nah, we promised. How about putting it off for another month? Or we could make JONATHAN DAVIES do it? Heh heh. Right, where's he got to? Ah ha!

Neeeeeow! Dakka dakka dakka! Kaboom!

"Crikey, Ginger, pull up! Over."

"I can't! I think my flaps have gone a bit funny. Over." Neeeow! Boom!

"Bail out! Bail out! Over." Dakka dakka dakka. (Ricochet noises.)

"Er, okay then. Over and out."

Sorry about that. Just trying to inject a bit of excitement into this thing because, let's face it, flight sims aren't exactly the most exciting bits of software around.

Or are they?

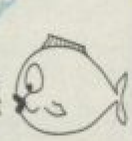
No. They're not. But there are loads of them about, and people keep buying them. Why is this? Perhaps we'd better investigate.

RATINGS

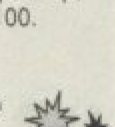
Once again, the normally-so-versatile *YS* rating system doesn't really seem too appropriate here (instant appeal? Addictiveness?). So what we've done is to come up with a revised system, specially tailored to meet the needs of today's flight sim. Let's have a nosey...



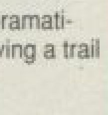
The View Can you see anything nice out of the window? Or is it all just green and blue wiggly lines? And does the scenery glide around smoothly or jerk around like an Allegro with a dodgy clutch?



Realism This can often be determined by the number of keys the game uses. So that's just what we've done. Counted 'em. As there are 40 keys on your basic Speccy, and each one can be doubled or even tripled up, the maximum comes out to exactly 100. Handy, eh?



Dakka Factor Is there much to shoot? Or is it all a matter of map-reading, gauge-watching and other such nonsense? And once you've shot whatever it is, does it explode dramatically and plummet to the ground leaving a trail of smoke behind it? Or not?



Net Weight A crucial part of any flight sim is all the junk that comes with it. So, adding together all the disks, maps, manuals, stickers and the box, what do the *YS* scales make of it? (All weights are, of course, approximate.) (In degrees.)

For thousands of years man has dreamt of flight... *(Cut the crap. Ed)* Erm, well, perhaps it's because they demand a bit more thought than your average arcade game. Fast reactions are all very well, but what about using your noddle occasionally? Keeping a plane in flight isn't just a matter of wobbling your joystick about a bit, which is the impression that lesser games give. You've got angles of attack to worry about, altitude, navigation, weapons systems, undercarriage... the list is endless. As are the manuals usually. And that's another thing. If you've never played one before you'll need to spend hours wading through one of these breeze-block tomes before you can even get off the ground.

Once you've got the thing up in the air though you're well away. With any luck there'll be lots of scenery to look at and plenty of enemy thingies to 'take out'. You might even like to indulge in a bit of aerobatics to pass the time. The one thing you should always keep an eye on though is the ground. Stay away from this at all costs. Unless you're landing, of course, which is another story altogether.

SO WHAT'S A FLIGHT SIM THEN, EH?

In compiling this guide I was faced with the usual problem – what exactly is a flight simulation? What are the criteria? Where do you draw the line? I decided to seek the advice of one of Europe's leading experts in the field of computer games.

"Er, Matt? (Cough.) Matt?" I ventured.

"Mmm?"

"Would you have said that, say, *Fighter Pilot* was a flight sim? Huh? Matt?" I enquired cheerily.

"Er, probably," he replied.

"How about *Harrier Attack*?"

"I expect it is, yes."

"Or *Night Raider*?"

"Um, look, I've got to go out. To the, er, shops. I'll see you later. Maybe."

Unperturbed, I decided to try Andy, but he didn't appear to hear me. I also tried ringing up a few friends. They all seemed to be out.

So it's all down to me then. Well, I reckon that really, in a flight sim, you ought to be in control of a plane of some sort. Ideally you'd get a 3D view out of the cockpit, but I'll be flexible and allow ones where you see the plane on the screen from the back (like *ATF*) and even ones where you see the view in 2D (from the top or something).

Another important guideline is the number of keys. Preferably there should be at least 2,452 of them, each with about three different functions. But, again, I'll allow a generous margin of error and set the bottom line at six.

And finally there's the manual. Obviously this should be as large and impenetrable as possible, with lots of incomprehensible acronyms that you have to keep looking up in the glossary at the back. A rough guide to length? Let's say 500-600 pages for a decent one or, if the game comes in an ordinary cassette box, an inlay card that folds out into a thin strip long enough to wrap round Matt's tummy at least two and a half times.

So now we know just what makes up a flight sim, let's take a look at a few...

THE 'TRUE' FLIGHT SIM

The obvious example of one of these is the original Flight Simulation, *but that was pretty crap. What we're basically talking about here is the sort where you're placed in the cockpit looking out of the window. In the bottom half of the screen (or, worse, on another screen altogether) is the instrument panel, which can generally be ignored, and in the top half is the view. This is generally green on the bottom and blue on the top. If it's the other way round you're probably in trouble. Scattered about will be lots of squiggly lines, and maybe a few dots on the ground to give the impression of 'speed' (ahem).*



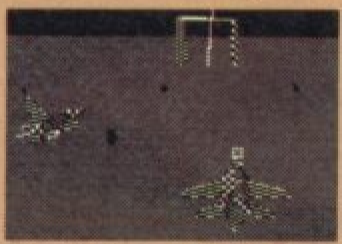
Night Raider – not one of the best but it'll do.

THE FIRST FLIGHT SIM EVER

Ha. This one's easy. It was *Flight Simulation*, one of the first games that ever came out on the Speccy. It was also the first game I bought. (Aargh! The secret's out.) It was one of those Psion games which came out on Sinclair's own label, and despite the mind-numbingly tedious piccy on the box (the instrument panel of a plane) it hung around near the top of the charts for years. In actual fact, *Flight Simulation* is a conversion of a ZX81 game of the same name. Yikes. We'll take a closer look at this one later on.

LOOKING-AT-IT-FROM-BEHIND ONES

These ones are really the next step down from the True Flight Sim. They're essentially the same, except that instead of a view out of the cockpit you get a view of the back of your plane. This isn't quite as pointless as it sounds, because usually the plane is small enough so that you can see past it to the 'scenery' beyond. This type of view generally makes it easier to judge landings and to see if you're about to fly into anything, but there is often a corresponding reduction in the number of knobs and dials, and an increase in things to do. Not what we want at all. ATF is the perfect example of this sort of thing.



Chuck Yeager. (Well, he sort of belongs in this box.)

EVERY FLIGHT SIM EVER (IN THE WORLD)*

***(near enough)**

Ace Cascade
Ace II Cascade
Ace Of Aces US Gold
Acrojet US Gold
Airliner Protek
ATF Digital Integration
Biggles Mirrorsoft
Chuck Yeager's Advanced Flight Trainer Electronic Arts
Combat Lynx Durell
Dambusters US Gold
Delta Wing Creative Sparks
Deep Strike Durell
F-15 Strike Eagle MicroProse
Flight Path 737 Anirog
Fighter Bomber Activision
Fighter Pilot Digital Integration
Flight Simulation Psion
Flyer Fox Bug Byte
Gee Bee Air Rally Activision
Gunship MicroProse
Nightflight Hewson
Nightflight II Hewson
Night Raider Gremlin
Project Stealth Fighter MicroProse
Red Arrows Database Software
Skyfox Ariolasoft
Space Shuttle Microdeal
Spitfire 40 Mirrorsoft
Strike Attack Micro Mart
Strike Force Harrier Mirrorsoft
Top Gun Ocean

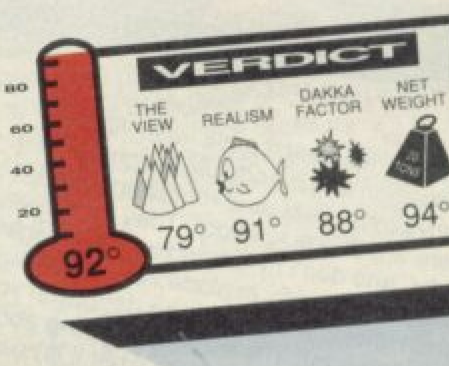
CHUCK YEAGER'S ADVANCED FLIGHT TRAINER
Electronic Arts

So what's this one got going for it? Three things actually. One, it's a proper flight simulator, no question about it. Two, it's got solid 3D graphics. And three, you get a choice of 14 different planes to fly, ranging from a 1918 Sopwith Camel to the SR-71 Blackbird. The cons? Well, Chuck Yeager might be an important historical figure and everything, but his contribution to the game consists mainly of irritating comments after you crash. And the other one is those 3D graphics. They look very nice generally, but sometimes the various shades of grey gang up against you so it's very hard to see what's going on. And they're not as smooth as they might have been either. There's another thing while we're at it too. While the 128K version is absolutely packed with features and things to do, the 48K one has been radically cut down and isn't nearly such an attractive proposition.



Listen, I'll buy YOU the farm, Chuck, it you don't shut up!!

Assuming you've got a 128K then *Chuck Yeager* is a stonking flight sim, with everything you could possibly want and a lot that other flight sims don't have (like racing against other planes and 'test flying').



LOOKING-AT-IT-FROM-JUST-ABOUT-ANYWHERE ONES

Now these really are the business. They're like a cross between the True Flight Sim and the Looking-At-It-From-Behind one, with lots more as well. In fact, what you can do is look at your plane from all sorts of different angles, including weird ones like from-the-ground and from-the-front-of-the-plane. To tell the truth, games like this are a bit scarce on the Speccy (they tend to flourish on posh computers like the Atari ST) but there are one or two good ones. Chuck Yeager is a notable example, as is Fighter Bomber.

LOOKING-AT-IT-FROM-THE-TOP ONES

Now we're in dicey territory. We're talking about things like TLL here. Quite frankly, they're not really, are they? Flight sims, I mean. They've rarely got more than four or five keys, placing them firmly on the arcade side of things. So let's pass over them.

LOOKING-AT-IT-FROM-THE-SIDE ONES

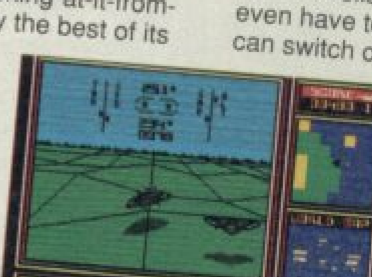
Now we're looking at things like Harrier Attack. *And they're certainly not flight sims. In fact, they're usually just scrolling shoot-'em-ups with planes instead of spaceships. There's always plenty of stuff to shoot, but technical accuracy is very limited indeed. You never have to worry about setting your flaps at the right angle or the navigational computer to the appropriate beacon, or watching your airspeed in case you stall. Useless.*



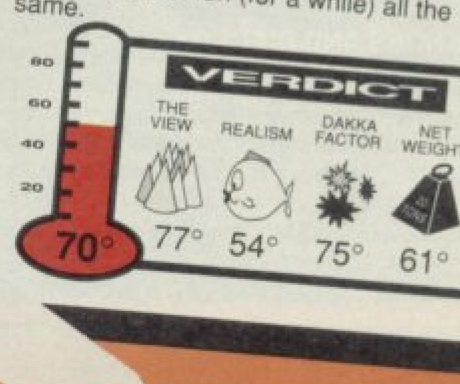
Harrier Attack – definitely *not* a flight simulator. (Clear now?)

ATF
Digital Integration

Here's the first of these looking-at-it-from-behind ones, and it's easily the best of its type around. You're in one of these Stealth Plane things, but, spookily enough, you actually get to see it on the screen in front of you, with the landscape undulating underneath. Hills and dippy bits are shown by grid line thingies which bend around. The trouble is that you can only do left and right turns and go up and down a bit – no rolls or loops. In fact, you don't even have to do this half the time as you can switch on your terrain-following radar and let the plane do it for you. Opposition is provided by planes which swoop around you, hopefully flying straight into your line of fire. (They invariably do.) It's not the most stimulating game around combatwise then, but underneath all this blatant arcadeyness lurks a strong strategic element where you've got to destroy certain targets and eventually win a war. All this happens over a huge map – lots of islands with sea between them. *ATF* isn't really a flight sim at all, but it's pretty good fun (for a while) all the same.

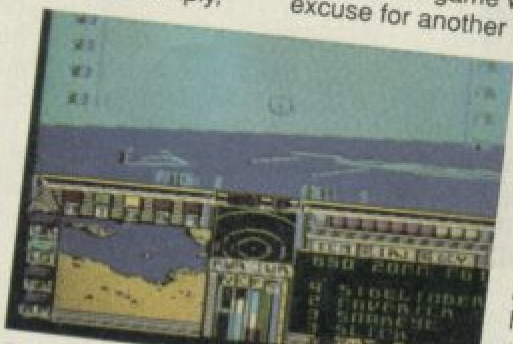


World map? Come on, lads, we're not going as fast as that!

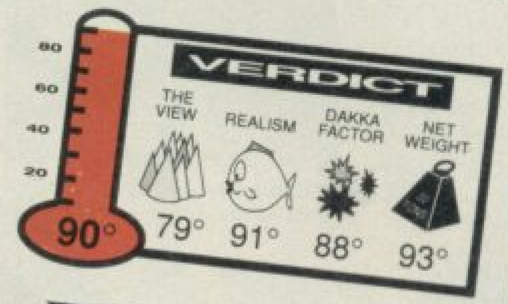


PROJECT STEALTH FIGHTER
MicroProse

If an award had to go to the most comprehensive, option-packed and, quite simply, darned complicated flight sim around, it might just get pinned onto *Project Stealth Fighter*'s uniform. Which is handy, as that's just what we're looking at now. Like most recent flight sims it's all about the legendary Stealth Fighter (which actually turned out to be not so legendary, and completely different to how everyone thought). This doesn't actually make a lot of difference to the way the game works – it's really just an excuse for another flight sim. Technically *PSF* doesn't break any new ground. We've all seen wire-frame graphics before, although these ones are about twice as detailed as anything before, and a bit faster. There is, however, masses to see/shoot. You can fly over land and sea, which means there are destroyers and aircraft carriers to take out as well as the usual tanks and buildings, and there's also a huge range of weapons and missions to use them on. Ideologically though, this one goes out the window. You have to spend the whole time beating up Russians and Arabs when really it ought to be the Welsh. (Just kidding.)

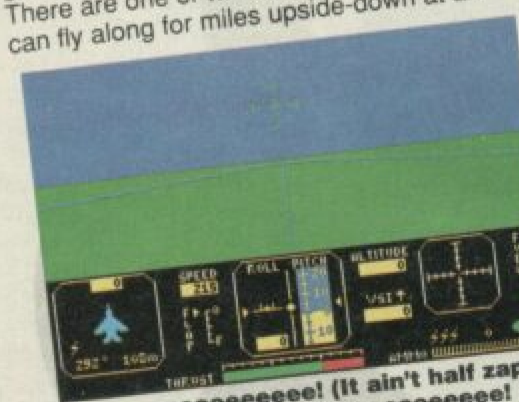


"Hey, Brad, is this Kuwait yet?" "Er, dunno (burp)... Let's bomb it anyway!"

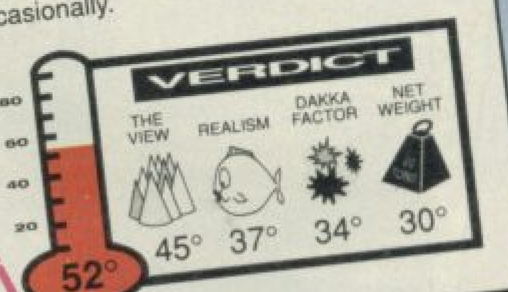


FIGHTER PILOT
Digital Integration

This was the next 'biggie' after *Flight Simulation* and introduced a number of innovations. First, and most importantly, there are things to shoot. They look pretty awful, and don't fly around terribly imaginatively, but they do explode very satisfyingly when shot (this can only be done with your machine gun). The other great thing about it is that your F-15 (for that's what it is) can zoom around at a fair old rate, and is much more fun to fly than the old *Flight Simulation* Cessna. This is partly because it's a more wazzy plane, but credit must also be given to the superior programming. There's also a bit more to look at on the ground, including a better runway and some strange square things dotted about. And the ground is green which is a great advantage. There are one or two oddities though – you can fly along for miles upside-down at an altitude of zero, which isn't too encouraging, but at least the compass is correct (*Flight Simulation*'s had 370°) and there's a nice head-up display with all the important bits on. This took over as the definitive flight sim for ages, and is still worth taking up for a spin occasionally.



Wheeeeeeeeeeeeee! (It ain't half zappier, this one.) Wheeeeeeeeeeeeee!



SO, YOU WANT TO WRITE A FLIGHT SIM?

Er, are you sure? Stick your tongue out. Hmm. Say "Ahh". Crikey. Okay, let's take a look at some essential ingredients...

THE SETTING Flight sims are always set in a spooky 'alternative' world where the sky is always blue and the grass is always green (and so is just about everything else for that matter). Other vegetation is pretty sparse, apart from triangles on sticks which look a bit like trees. These are usually about 600 ft high (if your altimeter is anything to go by). The only buildings tend to be in a modernist 'cereal packet' style, with no-one living in them. Mountains are handy for flying into.

KNOBS AND DIALS There should be a ridiculous number of these, all of which are unmarked and of no obvious use. If they start reading 'zero', eject. There should also be little red lights which start flashing and making a beeping noise for no apparent reason. They only stop when you press every key on the keyboard very hard, at which point the plane crashes.

THE MAP Any relation to a normal map should be avoided. Flight sim maps consist of a large grid (usually green-on-yellow, or something else that's probably outlawed by EEC legislation) covered in little splotches. Quite what these are isn't entirely clear. Somewhere in the middle is a flashing square – you. This never seems to move, no matter how long you look. Meanwhile, back in the cockpit, your plane has just been shot down.

THE CONTROLS As previously explained, there should be as many as possible, and then lots more on top of that. They should all have obvious purposes (eg P for throttle up, K for map, Symbol Shift, Caps Shift and 3 for left etc). There should also be a disconcerting delay (say, five minutes) between pressing a key and anything happening. The need for constant reference to the manual can easily be incorporated, during which time the plane flies into a tree.

SOUND Don't put any in. Apart from the 'crash effect', of course.

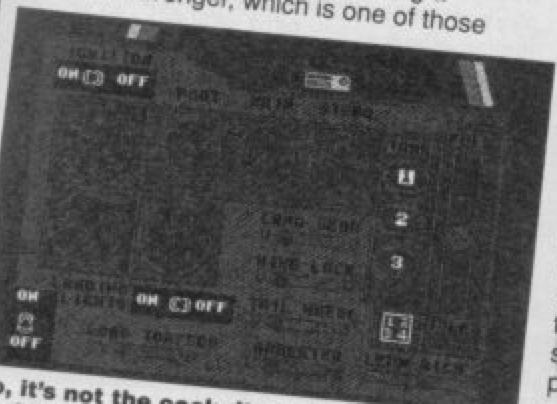
THE ENEMY Somewhere on the screen there should be a radar with a little flashing dot on it. This is the enemy aircraft. The player will turn to face it, prime the air-to-air missiles and wait for the two aircraft to meet. This, of course, never happens. After a certain length of time the player will get bored, engage the autopilot and nip out to put the kettle on. His plane then gets shot down.

LANDING As you'll no doubt be aware, this is impossible. Real F-15s and things land perfectly first time, every time. But not simulated ones. You get them lined up exactly, set the speed, rate of descent and everything exactly according to the instructions, flaps and undercarriage down, set it down oh-so-gently and... kaboom.

PLAYTESTING Once the game's nearing completion you'll have to thoroughly test it. Sit yourself down in front of it and ask someone to come and check up on you after an hour or so. If you're still awake the game is obviously in need of modification.

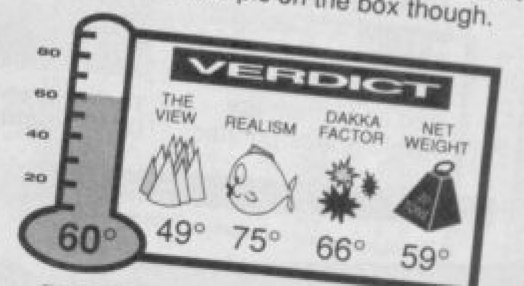
NIGHT RAIDER
Gremlin

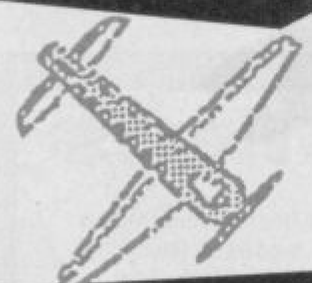
Okay, this time round you're piloting a Grumman Avenger, which is one of those



No, it's not the cockpit view according to Jackie. It's the, er, thing behind.

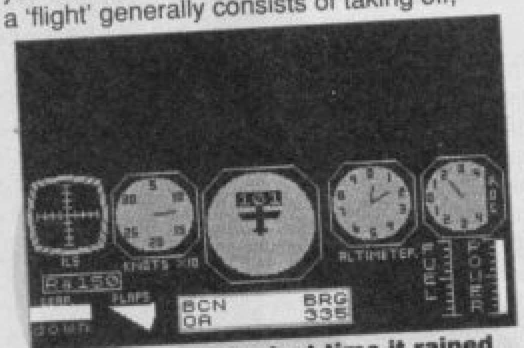
chubby American WWII bombers, and your mission is to wipe out the Bismark – "the most fearsome battle machine ever to haunt the seas" (apart from the time when Andy 'Street Hawk' Ounsted accidentally drove his Vespa off Skegness pier, that is). Luckily the ship has already been crippled by some Royal Navy biplanes, so all you've got to do is take off from the Ark Royal and finish it off. Simple really. Unfortunately, though, your plane seems to have a crew of one – you – so you've got to fly the plane, work the guns and do the engineery bits (like fiddling about with the engines) by flipping between a whole load of different screens. Luckily for Gremlin, the attack took place at night so the graphics are limited to the moon glistening off the sea and the enemy planes buzzing past the windows. This, along with the very restricted flying abilities of your plane, means that the game hasn't really got a lot to recommend it, apart from your bullets which look very nice whizzing off into the night. The flying parts are just a case of keeping on course to the Bismark, and the shooting parts are really just another *Op Wolf* thing. Not really a proper flight sim then, and not a massively enjoyable shoot-'em-up either. Shame about that. There's a nice pic on the box though.





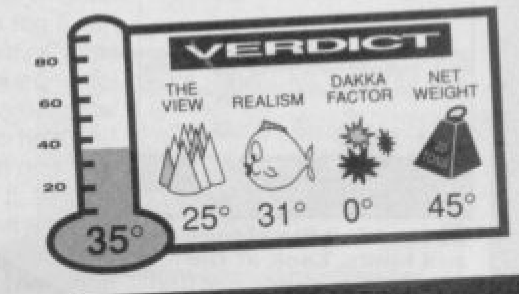
FLIGHT SIMULATION
Psion

As we found earlier, this was the first Speccy flight sim ever, and it shows. It comes on a cassette with the game on one side and 'Blank Tape' conveniently written on the other. See which one you prefer. It actually looks quite promising (the inlay card is massive, with loads of miniscule instructions) and, despite the fact that it's largely written in Basic, the game moves along at a fair old rate. The problem is the scenery. All there is to look at on the ground (which is blue) is the runway, Lake Orb (which is round), Lake Tri (which is tri-angular) and some hills (which you can't actually see at all, but you'll know if you crash into them). The plane responds to your controls very sluggishly, but luckily you don't have to use them much because a 'flight' generally consists of taking off,

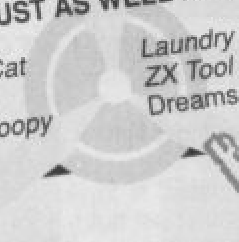


And when was the last time it rained in *your* flight sim, eh? (Ho ho.) ... (Er, it was a joke. No... Oh, go back to sleep.)

pointing the plane towards the other air-port, coming back three and a half hours later and landing. If you crash there's a lengthy disaster effect and then you're asked if you want another flight. Press N and the program stops. Hmm. A legend in its own time, but a bit crap in this one.

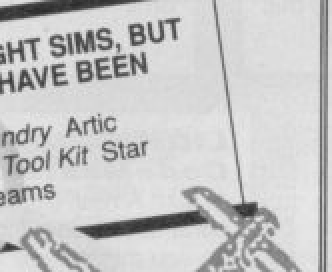






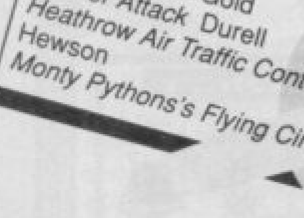
GAMES THAT AREN'T FLIGHT SIMS, BUT MIGHT JUST AS WELL HAVE BEEN

Caesar The Cat Mirrorsoft
Mr Wong's Loopy Laundry Artic
ZX Tool Kit Star Dreams



GAMES THAT MOST DEFINITELY AREN'T FLIGHT SIMS

Beaky And The Egg Snatchers Fantasy
Blue Max US Gold
Harrier Attack Durell
Heathrow Air Traffic Control Hewson
Monty Pythons's Flying Circus Virgin
Night Gunner Digital Integration
P47 Firebird
Scramble Spirits Grandslam
Spitfire Encore
TLL Vortex

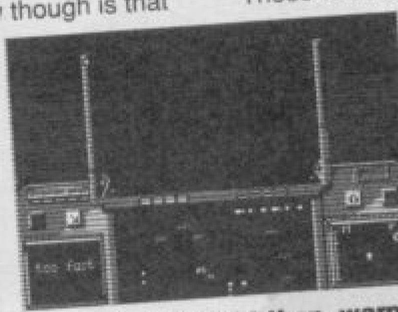


THE A-Z OF FLYING TERMS

Ammo A Latin verb.
Being Tail Gunner Going to the loo.
Chocks Away Someone's pinched your lunch.
Dogfight These are illegal.
Eject If in doubt...
Flaps Do lots of these if the propellor stops going round.
Ground The main hazzard faced by most pilots.
Heading See Football Guide, *YS* issue 54.
Instruments In-flight entertainment.
Joystick Long thing between your legs with a red bit on the end.
Kippers Probably the nickname of a World War I pilot.
Landing The bit at the top of the stairs.
Mae West Something pilots like to keep handy.
Normandy A nice place to go on holiday.
Orange If you paint your 'crate' this colour you'll probably get shot down.
Piece Of Cake Dreadful drama series about planes on telly.
Quebec Keep an eye on the map if you don't want to end up here.
Roger *(Er, do S. Ed)*
Six O'Clock Tea-time.
Take Off Spoof or parody.
Undercarriage See *Joystick*.
V-Formation Give one of these to the enemy as you fly by.
Wings Something to do with Paul McCartney.
X-Ray You're meant to say this over the radio quite often.
Yellow See *Orange*.

STRIKE FORCE HARRIER
Mirrorsoft

Right, so we all know what a Harrier is. What you might not know though is that it's one of the fiddliest planes to actually fly. To get it to take off you've got to have the nozzle things pointing downwards, and then point them backwards to make it fly along. There are also all kinds of things inbetween, and all of them are faithfully incorporated into this aging sim. It's a proper looking-out-of-the-cockpit job, and features ground attack as well as aerial combat. These tend to be split into two sections – one below the clouds and one above. Graphically we're talking seriously ropey here. There's plenty to see, particularly on the ground, but everything is made up of very small sprites which never seem to get especially close (and hence stay very small). But the flying is generally well done, and all this 'thrust vectoring' business works quite well. There is, of course, a war to fight and it mainly seems to consist of destroying tanks. So it's okayish, but very old-look without much in the way of lasting interest.



Too fast, eh? Right then, warp factor eight, Mr Sulu! (Ha!)

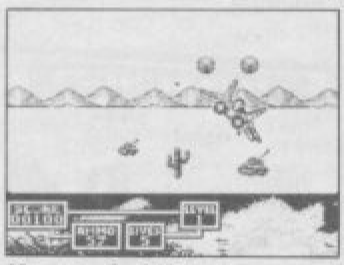
VERDICT – 60°

THE VIEW	REALISM	DAKKA FACTOR	NET WEIGHT
50°	60°	60°	70°

THE CHEAPO SIDE OF THINGS

You've got to give them credit – the budget people'll have a crack at anything. And flight sims are no exception. A full-pricey can take anything up to 18 months and a massive team of highly-trained programmers to develop, so what does your average beer-swilling cheapo programmer manage to come up with in the two weeks (evenings only) he's allotted? Let's brace ourselves and take a look.

F-16 FIGHTING FALCON
Mastertronic


Never mind the planes and tanks. Look at the size of that ruddy cactus!

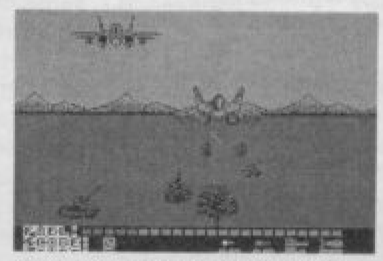
A couple of major questions hang over this one. Firstly, why has it got a picture of a Harrier (with an extra tail fin) on the loading screen? And, secondly, why bother releasing it at all? (It's a bit crap.) The second question is easy enough to answer. It originally came out with the highly successful (?) Magnum lightgun, and obviously appeared to have some mileage left in it. Flight sim-wise, things don't look so hot either. It's a blatant *Afterburner* rip-off (but without the rocking landscape) and as *Afterburner* wasn't a flight sim this isn't either. Oops.

VERDICT – 41°

THE VIEW	REALISM	DAKKA FACTOR	NET WEIGHT
60°	5°	79°	4°

SOVIET FIGHTER MIG 29
CodeMasters

Cor blimey. This is almost exactly the same as *F-16*. What's going on? Could it be the light-gun connection again? There are a few minor differences (improvements, luckily). There are things to collect, which come down on parachutes, and it's a bit easier. Apart from that, no difference. It's still a bit crap, and doesn't even come close to being a sim. Let's search on...

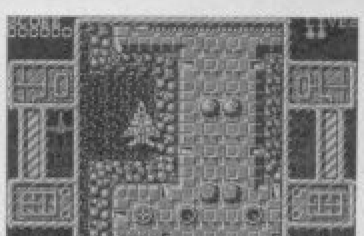

A-ha! No cactus this time. Just a tree. (Variety's the spice of life, eh, readers?)

VERDICT – 43°

THE VIEW	REALISM	DAKKA FACTOR	NET WEIGHT
63°	6°	80°	5°

TOMCAT
Players

Encouraged by the name (a Tomcat, apart from being a feline of the male gender, is a rather spanky US Navy plane), and, in sheer desperation, I decided to give this one a whirl. Bad idea. It's a very ordinary vertically-scrolling shooter with one outstanding feature – it's completely impossible to get anywhere in. The aeroplane theme is a bit weak too, as you could easily replace it with a spaceship or something and not notice the difference. Still no joy then.

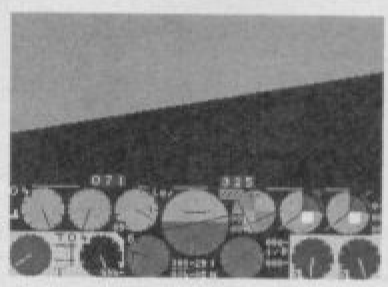

Um, will somebody please tell me if I've taken off yet?

VERDICT – 36°

THE VIEW	REALISM	DAKKA FACTOR	NET WEIGHT
59°	5°	50°	9°

LIGHTNING SIMULATOR
CodeMasters

At last! A real, genuine, *bona fide* budget flight sim! As you might have guessed, it 'simulates' a Lightning which is a fast but extremely old RAF plane. *Lightning Sim* has that inimitable budget feel to it, but it's still an actual flight sim – and a looking-out-of-the-window one at that. It brings a lump to my throat, it really does. There are plenty of dials to keep an eye on, and all the usual flight sim features. As games go it's awful. But I don't care. It's a flight sim – and that's what counts.


Oh dear. All dressed up and nowhere to go.

VERDICT – 65°

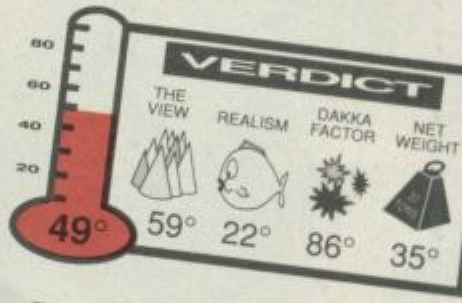
THE VIEW	REALISM	DAKKA FACTOR	NET WEIGHT
60°	51°	62°	66°

DEEP STRIKE
Durell

Here's another looking-at-it-from-behind one. However, this time what you're looking at is actually a World War I biplane, a bomber in fact, but you're not actually in control of it. Eh? This is actually because you're meant to be protecting it by flying along behind it in a fighter. Dastardly German planes zoom about trying to shoot down the bomber, so what you've got to do is shoot them down while resisting the temptation to shoot down the plane you're meant to be escorting (and it's a very strong temptation, I can tell you). The eventual aim is probably to bomb a target of some sort, but along the way are various enemy buildings and tanks (in WWI?) which you can also get the bomber to, er, bomb. Although the view is that of a True Flight Sim, you can't actually do much in the way of flying around, so it's really much more like *ATF* or something. The landscape is certainly very *ATF*-like – lots of grid-lines and hills – although I believe *Deep Strike* came first. There is a map, however, so it is a bit flight-simmy. But not enough, unfortunately, from letting it slip into being a slightly crap *Op Wolf*-style shoot-'em-up. I fact, I can't really see what it's doing in the guide at all.

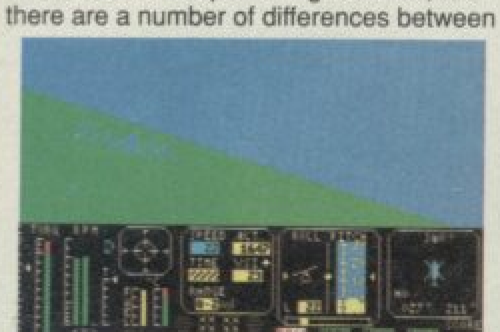


I said "Eat lead, Johnny Hun!", not bleed all over my sky. Tch.

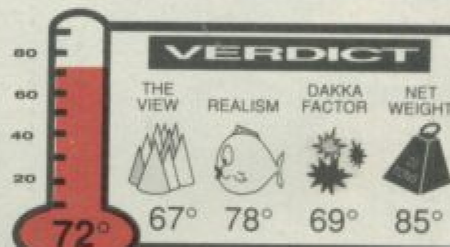


TOMAHAWK
Digital Integration

This one's the sequel to *Fighter Pilot*, and there are a number of differences between the two games. Number one is that you're flying a helicopter. This is a big step-up from a mere F-15, and doubles the number of keys under your fingers at a stroke. Number two is that you've got a choice of different weapons to play with, some of which lock on and home in automatically – brilliant fun. Number three? Erm, well there are some nice-looking mountains to fly between, plenty of trees and a fair few buildings. All of these were new at the time. And, ooh, I'm losing count now, but there's an enemy helicopter to shoot down and lots of tanks and things on the ground as well. And (and! And!) there's a 'strategy' element to it where you've got to win a war or something. So it's a pretty complicated game then. And, what's more, it's extremely playable. The helicopter handles very convincingly, and is fairly simple to fly once you've worked out what's what. And the large quantity of shootables means that you won't get bored of it in a hurry.

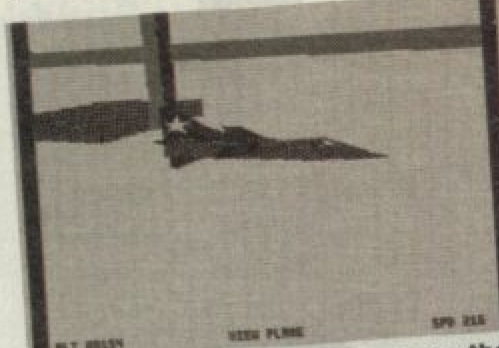


Tomahawk... Chopper... Bit of a nifty play on words there, don't you think? (No, I don't either.)

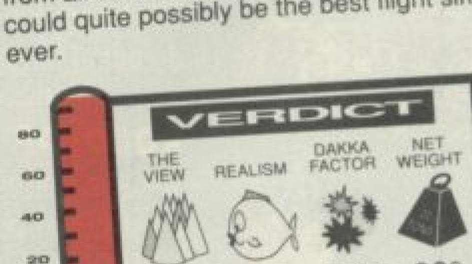


FIGHTER BOMBER
Activision

While *Fighter Bomber* isn't regarded as one of the most technically-accurate flight sims on the ST and Amiga, it's brilliant fun and ideal for Speccysation. It wouldn't have been quite the same without the solid 3D graphics, so they've bunged those in with astonishing success. They've also given you the same choice of planes to fly (but cut down a bit) so you can choose between the F-4 Phantom, the SAAB Viggen, the Tornado and the MiG 27 'Flogger'. They all handle differently and can carry different payloads, and the Tornado and the MiG have authentic sweeping-back wings. On top of all this there's a range of missions to go on, and plenty of weaponry. The emphasis is on attacking ground targets, although air-to-air combat does feature. Oh, and there's the 'hop outside and look at your plane from all sorts of positions' option too. It could quite possibly be the best flight sim ever.



Spanking it may be, but where are the pigs and sheep to practice on, eh?





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HINTS'N'TIPS

YS TIPSHOP



- Proprietor – JONATHAN DAVIES.
- Purveyor of the finest tips this side of, oh, lord knows, that planet over there with the pink nobbly bits on.
- Opening hours – never shuts, mate!

It's been a 'fun'-packed month. Not only have I been preparing this month's Tipshop for your delectation, but the totally fabulous and eminently desirable *YS* Tipshop Tiptionary has been having its finishing touches tweaked too. This hasn't left a lot of time for doing other things (sleeping, eating, visiting the bathroom etc), but I've attempted to carry on regardless.

So I'll thrust a weary hand into the post-heap and see what I can find. Yuck. I'll try again. Ah, here we are. A ripe and tender collection of tips, the likes of which are rarely, if ever, seen outside these pages. So think yourselves lucky and read on...

GREGORY LOSES HIS CLOCK

Way back in the July issue Anthony Whitaker had a good go at a solution to this tasty little barg, but unfortunately he ran out of steam halfway through. And, until now, no-one has been able to progress any further. Enter David Cook.

This carries on from where Anthony left off on Level Three.

Go right as far as you can and get the jumping bean. Go left to the snake room and eat the bean. Jump across the pits in the next room, go left and jump the fly. Get the gun and shoot the fly. Go right, right and right and shoot the monkey's ball. Then shoot the bird and it'll drop a clock piece. Pick it up and drop the gun. Then go right and right through the door. Bingo!

Splendid stuff. I think, perhaps, a badge. (Rummage.) Ah yes, here we are. I'll pop it in an envelope right away. Now I'll take it out again. Ooh, this is fun!

SHADOW WARRIORS

Right, who've we got here then? Er... oh yes – Iain Spray of Wrexham in Clwyd. And a tip for that rather juicy Ocean shoot-'em-up, *Shadow Warriors*, by the looks of things. Take long to suss out, Iain?
Blimmin' hours.
Lots of hot mugs of steaming cocoa?
Tons.
Marvellous. Have a badge.

LEVEL 1- KILL THE FIRST TWO BADDIES AT THE START AND THEN WALK RIGHT TO THE WALKWAY WITHOUT STOPPING ONCE. CLIMB UP ONTO IT AND WALK RIGHT AS FAR AS YOU CAN. THEN TURN LEFT AND KILL THE BADDIES THAT FOLLOWED YOU, AS THEY CLIMB UP ONE BY ONE.

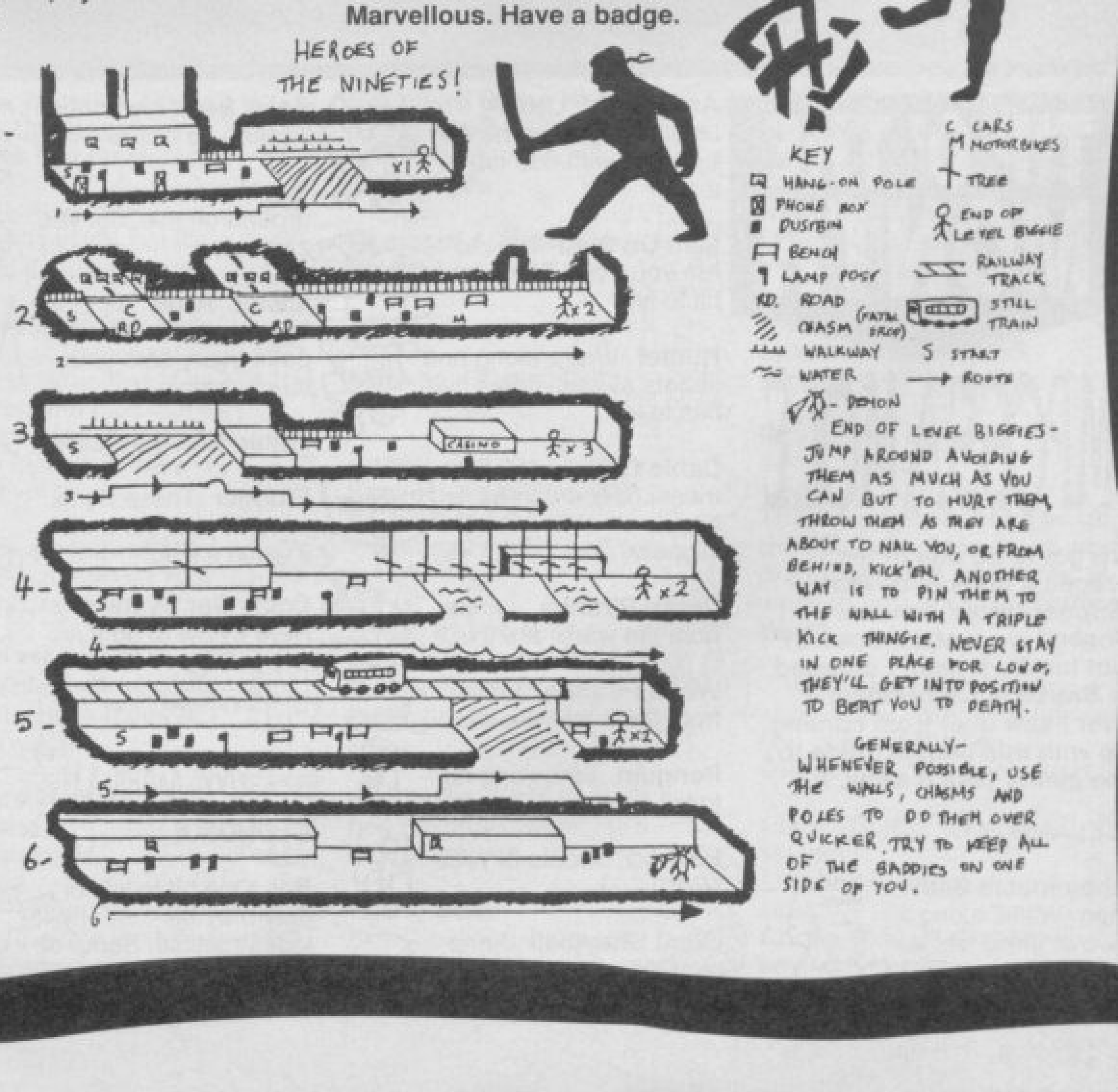
LEVEL 2. TO DODGE THE CARS ON THE ROAD SOMERSAULT OVER THEM WITHOUT STOPPING TO WALK. TO DODGE THE MOTORBIKES, STAY AT THE TOP OF THE SCREEN.

LEVEL 3- BASICALLY JUST FOLLOW THE PATH BUT USE THE CHASM AND LAMP POST TO YOUR ADVANTAGE.

LEVEL 4- HERE, YOU MUST SWING FROM TREE TO TREE WITHOUT STOPPING ONCE. ESPECIALLY NOT ON THE ISLAND WHERE TWO LOG LUMBERS COULD FLATTEN YOU!

LEVEL 5. THE RAILWAY TRACK IS THE HARDEST BIT ON THIS LEVEL. IT'S HARD TO MANOEUVER QUICKLY AS IT IS VERY NARROW. MOVE CAUTIOUSLY AND SLOWLY!

LEVEL 6 - THIS LEVEL IS THE HARDEST. THERE IS HARDLY ANY SCENERY FOR YOU TO INTERACT WITH. MOVE EVEN MORE SLOWLY AND LET THEM COME TO YOU IN DRIBS AND DRABS.



KEY
- HANG-ON POLE
- PHONE BOX
- DUSTBIN
- BENCH
- LAMP POST
- RD. ROAD
- CHASM (FATAL DROP)
- WALKWAY
- WATER
- C CARS
- M MOTORBIKES
- TREE
- END OF LEVEL BIGGIE
- RAILWAY TRACK
- STILL TRAIN
- S START
- ROUTE
- DEMON

END OF LEVEL BIGGIES- JUMP AROUND AVOIDING THEM AS MUCH AS YOU CAN BUT TO HURT THEM, THROW THEM AS THEY ARE ABOUT TO NAIL YOU, OR FROM BEHIND, KICK'EM. ANOTHER WAY IS TO PIN THEM TO THE WALL WITH A TRIPLE KICK THINGIE. NEVER STAY IN ONE PLACE FOR LONG, THEY'LL GET INTO POSITION TO BEAT YOU TO DEATH.

GENERALLY- WHENEVER POSSIBLE, USE THE WALLS, CHASMS AND POLES TO DO THEM OVER QUICKER. TRY TO KEEP ALL OF THE BADDIES ON ONE SIDE OF YOU.

DR. BERKMANN'S CLINIC



GOT A GAMESNAG? SEE THE SPECIALIST!

THUNDERBIRDS

Well, poor old Jack Skaife may not have known the passwords to Missions Two and Three (don't worry, Jack, neither did I), but every other *YS* reader certainly did. Letters? Who needs wallpaper? The passwords were, of course, RECOVERY and ALOYSIUS (the password for Level Four, incidentally, is ANDERSON), while, to get past the force field in the lower tunnel on Level Four, select the gun and do not use it until you get to the force field. Then press Fire and the gun will shoot the three wotsits on the wall. To stop the robot, use the glue, not the gun – those bullets need to be saved for later. Thanks to (pulls names from hat) **Jason Laventine**, **Mark Lawton**, **Thomas 'Thos' Vanner**, **James Sneddon** and our old friend, the ever-hungry **Andy 'Chunky Boy' Leyden**.

BATMAN THE CAPED CRUSADER

Indeed, the aforementioned Chunky Boy had a snag of his own to tidy up, and a slightly smaller army of helpers has come to his assistance. He'd got to the Penguin's mansion but couldn't find the computer you have to switch off. Here's **Ken Green**.

"Yeah, look, it's like this. Before entering the mansion you need the torch and magnet, which you'll use immediately on entering. Then go left, left, right, right, up, right, up, left, left, left, up, left, up, right, right, right, down, left, down, right, right, up, right, up, right, left, down, right, down, left, up, right. And remember – get and use everything you see during your tour of the mansion." This should get you to a screen called 'The Big Turn-Off' – use the games disk that you found earlier to shut down the computer and voilà! you're a Frenchman. *(Eh? Ed)* Massive furry thanks, too, to **Michael Walpole**, **David Aitken**, **Steven Clappison**, **James McConnell** and everybody else who wrote in.

ALIEN SYNDROME

Remember Tim Boyle? He had an even nastier end-of-level funster to worry about – the meganasty on Level One of this creaky coin-op conversion. **Gerwyn Bish**, though, knows his meganasties, and no mistake, guvnor...

"Sho' thang, Dr B. To kill the first level bumper baddie, you ideally need a Fireball (Fb) icon weapon, and, luckily, there is one just to the left of the exit. To kill the critter, shoot it in that little slit in its body *(Er, are you sure about this? Dr B)* – after a direct hit it'll flash red, and after nine or ten hits it'll explode. Make sure you dodge the little arm as it flies out to the left side of the TV. When the remaining hedgehog charges you, duck aside and shoot it as it passes you. Oh, and make sure you shoot that little reproductive fish that follows you around."

No argument with any of that, Gerwyn. Other Clinicians, though, disagree strongly. Here's **Richard 'Badge A Month' Swann**...

"I too had problems with this one, but I managed to crack it. First of all, make sure that you *don't* have the flamethrower when you go through the exit after rescuing ten comrades. It might be all right for blasting ordinary aliens but it can't fire from a long distance. Instead, pick up the dual gun and the increased shotpower, which will give you two sets of thick bullets when you fire. Now go through the exit. Run up to the top of the screen and start zapping the alien. When it throws its flames at you, run back to the bottom and continue zapping. After a bit, the yellow head will break off from the main body and attack you solo. This is nasty! Try and run to the right of the screen, shooting the head as you go, so you can get behind it. If it goes after you, dodge its firepower and go back to the top left of the screen. Just keep shooting and moving and dodging and eventually you'll succeed!"

Sounds optimistic, Richard. I include both explanations at length because it seems to me that a combination of the two might be the most successful. (Incidentally, a third Syndromer, **David Jolley**, recommends the laser for the job.) Still, best of luck, Tim, and tell us if you make it.

CARRIER COMMAND

Sebastian Wronski wanted to know how to move the stockpile from island to island. "Good question!" yelled the Clinicians, as one. Some, like **Darren Turnbull** and **Mark Lawton**, showed how to define an island as a stockpile (first, select Resource map mode, then select the island you wish to make into the stockpile and centre the map on it, and finally click onto the PROG icon and the island, if valid, will become the stockpile) but as that was in the instructions it's a reasonable bet Seb probably knew it already. The best and most pertinent comment, though, came from **Thomas Hopkins**: "The answer is – you can't."

HAYLP!

Here's another rooting tooting ripsnorting bag of snags. Do you know the answers?

Matthew O'Sullivan: "How do you defeat the big end-of-game bully in *Vatman*?"

Antony Gedge: "In *Platoon* I can get to the TNT, but not the village. Haylp!"

David Forbes: "How do you get past the giant tortoise at the end of Level Two in *The New Zealand Story*?"

Ken Green: "What's the access code for part two of *Navy Moves*?"

Robert McCauley: "In *Dan Dare II*, I kill all the Supertreens, get to the exit on Level Two, but the door won't open. Haylp!"

Graham Turner (Mr): "In *Castle Master*, how do you get the object down off the wall in the cavern under the hot baths? And where's the key to the stables?"

Stephen Taylor: "In *Flunky*, how do you give Fergie freckles?"

And one more...

Stephen Forster: "In *Indy And The Last Crusade*, how the heck do you get the Cross of Coronado?"

That's all for this month, but remember – if you're dismally gamesnagged, or you know the solutions to some of these knotty puzzlers, write now to Dr B at *YS*, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW. Anyone mentioned wins a luxury badgette, and there's three games in it for every month's top tipmaster. Heigh ho, Trigger!

TIP O' THE MONTH

IMPOSSAMOLE

It's got to be one of the crappest puns ever, that. '*Impossamole*', I mean. It doesn't work at all, does it? But luckily it hasn't stopped A Smith (a pseudonym if ever I saw one) from coming up with this baddie guide to the game. Take it away, A.

ICELAND

Abominable Snow Man Walks along. Two or three hits to kill.

Arctic Bird Usually unkillable (but some can be killed with one hit) – avoid!

Man On Sled Tries to run you over. Takes one hit to kill.

Hunter Walks along and shoots at you. Takes five hits to kill.

Cable Car Jump onto these, but be careful as the purple one is slippery.

Green Piranha Jumps from the water like this...

White Piranha Jumps from the water like this...

Penguin Takes one hit to kill.

Eskimo Shoots at you – avoid!

Giant Snowball Jump over these.

Polar Bear Very tough – takes 15 hits to kill.

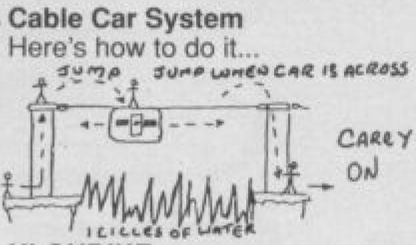
Ice You can turn around on this, but you can't stop.

Icicles Avoid, as these take away one strength point every time you touch them.

Water Same as icicles.

Plunger These try to squash you. Go under it when it's up.

Cable Car System Here's how to do it...



KLONDIKE

Bat One hit to kill, or they may be indestructible. Some of them shoot at you.

Stalactite When you get near them they fall, but they're easy to dodge.

Miner's Helmets Indestructible and very dangerous – avoid!

Frog Unkillable and dangerous. It jumps like this...

Skeleton Two to three hits to kill – easy.

Rats Two to four hits to kill. Jump over the red ones, but the yellow ones can jump so avoid them.

Miner Tough. Needs five to six hits to kill. Get with a weapon.

Dynamite Man Just wait a while and he blows himself up (but keep away!).

Mining Cart Indestructible – avoid.

JOE BLADE THREE

This is a bit of a brill cheapie, it has to be said. With this in mind I'm happy to present a map of all 32 floors of the building, as charted by the illustrious Macc Mapper. There's also a generous helping of tips, courtesy of Steven Calvert. Hit it, Stevie.

First, search all the floors up to Floor Seven, marking on the map where the charges are. Don't activate the charges yet – you only have ten minutes from when the first charge is set. Now go to the computer on Floor Three. Hack the computer and go to the individual floors. Go for lift passes, hostages and detonators. Once you have all of them it's time for the Confrontation with Crax. He'll be on a floor between 20 and 25. Use the computer to find out which. Find him and shove him into a wall to enter the subgame. Don't worry if you don't complete the sub-game. You won't lose a life. After sorting out Crax, arm the explosives. If you've already done this you've been dead an hour. You need the map so you know where to go. Once all six are armed go to Floor 28. Find the ladder and press Down. Then head right to the chopper to finish the game.

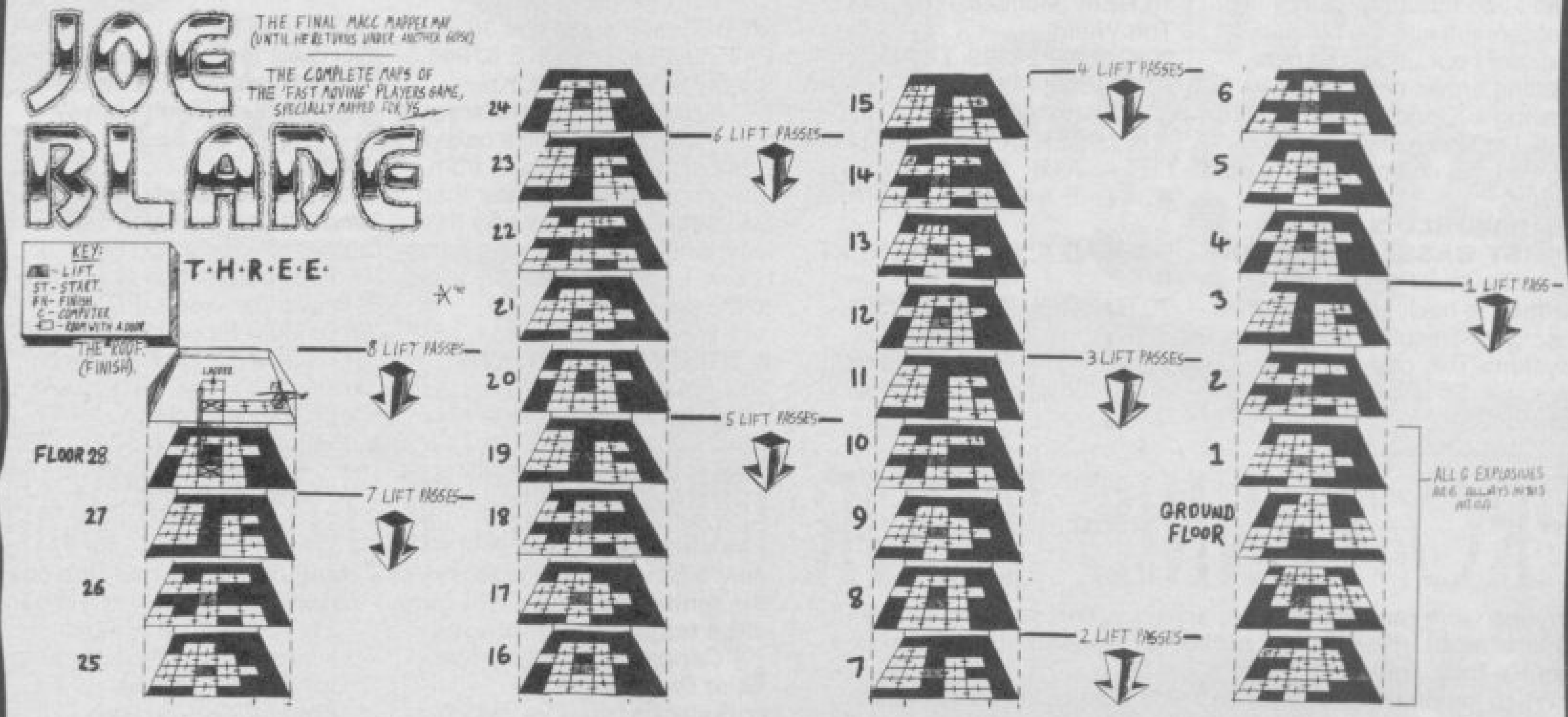
THE SUB-GAMES

Security Doors Not too hard, and can be avoided with security passes. If you can't do this, panic! Do anything – it normally works. This is the one where you die if you fail.

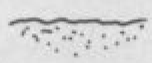
Computer Access Code Easy! Just get the 1s and 2s on the left and the 3s and 4s on the right. If all else fails, panic.

Capture Crax Panic, scream, tighten bicycle clips, call for mother etc.

Er, thanks a lot, Steven. Sound advice there, I don't think. But, luckily for you, I got a bit of a Big Tips Badge surplus at the moment, so you can have one all the same.



Purple Slime Like water in arctic.



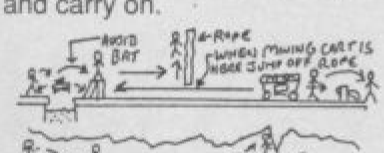
Conveyor Belt Carries you along in the direction that it's going.



Plunger Same as in Iceland.



• To avoid the two mining cars kick or shoot bat and climb onto root. When the cart returns, jump down when it's under you and carry on.



ORIENT

Chinese Bear He stays still and shoots at you. Jump over his bullets. (He's indestructible.)



Origami Bird Takes one hit to kill, or may be indestructible.



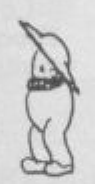
Sumo Wrestler Doesn't move, so just kick him three to four times. Easy.



Karate Man Two to three hits to kill, but it's best to jump over him.



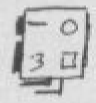
Armless Farmer Very deadly, so jump over him. He takes five to six hits from the bazooka to kill him. (Not as 'armless' as he looks!) *(Groan. Jonathan)*



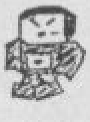
Cloud Indestructible. Drops acid rain on you, and moves when you get near.



Box Thing Indestructible (nearly). Jump over it.



Square Man Shoots at you, and is indestructible.



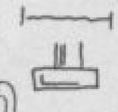
Ninja Shoots at you. Takes eight to ten hits to kill, so avoid.



Big Weird Sumo Wrestler Thing Unkillable. Jump over him when he rolls towards you.

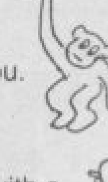


Plungers & Water Just like all the others.



AMAZON

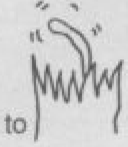
Monkey Drops on you. Eight hits to kill.



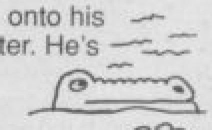
Snake Red ones are hard, taking five hits with a bazooka to kill them. Green ones only need two to three hits.



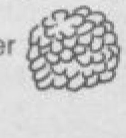
Snake In The Grass Jump over them, avoid them completely or hit them three to four times to kill.



Crocodile Jump onto his head to cross water. He's not dangerous.



Living Bush Indestructible. Jump over or avoid completely.



Mole-Eating Plant Shoots at you, moves along. Three hits to kill.



Humming Bird Unkillable, or maybe one hit to kill.



Chameleon Indestructible. It shoots, so jump over the bullets.



Plungers & Water Same as ever.

Thanks a lot, A, that was just the ticket. But for those who are still having problems, a word in you ear from Duncan West.

When you're on the high score table, enter your name as one of the following...

Ouchouch You won't die in the water.

Heinz 'Soups' up your weapons.

Lumbajak Gives you full energy.

Commando Means never having to reload.

PRACTICAL POKES

JON NORTH with some more luvvly jubblies!

Cripes, this summer sun is killing me. As I write, London's heatwave is still on the up and up, with predicted temperatures for the weekend threatening to somersault into the nineties. So, am I out under the rays, getting brown and generally having a 'Good Time'? No. I'm not. I'm sitting in my room writing this column. Grrrrrrrrrrrr!

THE WORLD'S FIRST BASIC MULTIPOKE

Usually, MultiPOKEs are written to hack loads of games using a particular protection system. This one, however, doesn't. So is it really a MultiPOKE? Who knows? Who cares? Type in the main POKE, choose between the *Race* and *Assault Course* listings and then tag whichever on the end.

```
10 REM "Multipoke" by Miktor The Weird
20 CLEAR 24999: LOAD ""CODE 23440
30 READ A,B,C
40 IF PEEK (A-3)<>195 THEN LET A=A+B
50 POKE A-3,33: FOR F=A TO A+C
60 READ A: POKE F,A: NEXT F
70 RANDOMIZE USR 23440

80 REM The Race (infy time and turbo)
90 DATA 23482,26,9,175,50,50,208
100 DATA 62,201,50,235,216,233

80 REM Assault Course (infy lives)
90 DATA 23496,26,4,175,50,154,101,233
```

POKE *CAPERS*

Many moons ago, games could be POKEd by MERGEing the loader, sticking the POKE in and running it, without the need for 300 bytes of code to crack the loader. *YS Capers*, one of many covertapes, didn't have a loader to be cracked, so here, from **Paul Hallett** of Dorset, are a few POKEs you can MERGE and put in line 35 – POKE 61920,0: POKE 61946,0 for infy power and POKE 61815,0 for infy time. Now you know why the column's called Practical POKEs. (Apart from anything, it sounds better than Practical DATA Lines.) By the way, when you're playing press N E X T L simultaneously to go to the next level.

A *DIZZY* BIT OF DATA

This column wouldn't be complete without at least one data line, so here, with a hack for another Covertape, *Dizzy*, is **Paul Hallett** (again).

```
10 REM Dizzy by Paul Hallett
20 LOAD ""CODE 23296
30 FOR F=23350 TO 23999
40 READ A: IF A=999 THEN RANDOMIZE USR 23296
50 POKR F,A: NEXT F
60 DATA 62,X,50,69,245: REM replace X with number of lives (1-255)
70 DATA 175,50,26,245: REM or use this line for infy lives
80 DATA 62,X,50,252,232: REM walking speed (1-7ish, normally 4, 1 is fast)
90 DATA 195,182,92,999: REM end marker
```

NOT QUITE

Not quite there this month were **Andy Ryals** and **Richard Swann**. Next month, guys?

NOW...

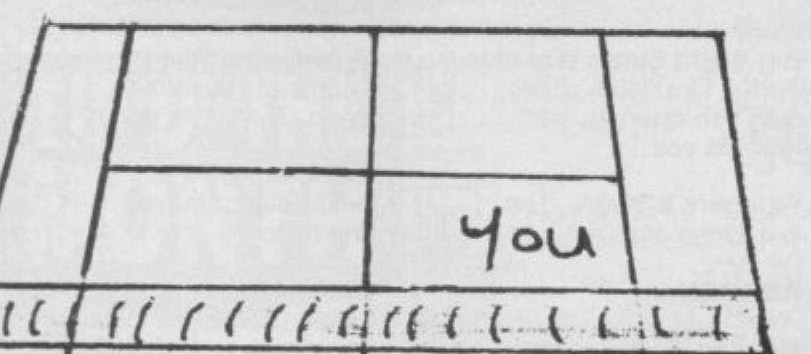
Was that absolutely brilliant or what? If you think you can do better, or even if you don't, or even if you can't do at all, drop a line to Jon North, PP, *YS*, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, Avon BA1 2BW. Send an sae and you'll get a reply, don't and you won't. Till next month...

PRO TENNIS TOUR

Anyone for a tennis tip? Here's Dave Rolton, who seems to have worked out a bit of a racket for serving success in *Pro Tennis Tour*. Dave?

When serving, press to the extreme right or left (depending on which side you're serving to) and the serve should be an ace. This works on a two-player game as well.

Also, when returning a serve go up to the net about here...



Then when he serves it should bounce within your reach. Time the Fire button correctly and you'll beat him. If it doesn't move to the middle he'll play it back to you, so just press Fire again.

Phew! Finished. I found this in my first hour of playing.

And your last, probably.

FERNANDEZ MUST DIE

July's Smash Tape was one of the fabbiest in ages. Not only did it feature the notorious *YS Capers*, but *Fernandez Must Die* was pretty corkstrous too. I've decided to print this tip from Jason Simpkin as he sent me 20p "for being a good writer". Innat nice? I bought a Praline-Crisp-flavour Milka Bar with it (they're my favourite).

If you're going to die with zero lives, get into a car and kill yourself (eg with a mine). When you restart you will have a car. It's not much, but it's something. Oh, and you can't go through barrier holes in a car.

Lovely stuff, Jason. And the choccy was nice too. (Mmpshlp, swallow.)

DAN DARE III

Here's a little cheat which quite a few people spotted. Duncan West was the lucky chap who was first out of the hat (well, his letter was anyway), so there goes his badge (weeee...) and here comes the tip (... plop).

If you're running low on lives and cash, go to the store and waste all your ammo. The computer will then give you over 4,000 creds. You can use this as often as you like.

And indeed I will. Thanks, Dunc, and thanks to everyone else who sent it in.

YOGI'S GREAT ESCAPE

Hang on, we've had this chap before. David Cook, I mean.

I know, but I've got this cunning 'thingy' you can do to *Yogi's Great Escape*.

Blimey. Go on, then.

Did you know that you can get a mixture of Jellystone Park and Mumbo Jumbo Marsh?

No.

Right, load up Level Four (Mumbo Jumbo Marsh) and lose your lives. Then, instead of rewinding the tape to the beginning, rewind to the start of Level Four and press Play. When the level has loaded, start it and there you have it – a mixture of Mumbo Jumbo Marsh and Jellystone Park!

Gosh. But what's the point?

Erm...

Never mind. Have a badge anyway. (Flip.)

YAWN

So here we are, down at the bottom of the page at last. I'll just pop a couple more matchsticks under my eye lids, and then I'll let you know the address to which to send all the tips, cheats, maps *(In black biro, please! Art Asst)*, and nutritional assistance you can muster. (Squelch.) That's better. Right. The address. It's *YS* Tipshop, *Y*... whoops, run out of space.


MONTY PYTHON'S FLYING CIRCUS
THE COMPUTER GAME
IT'S A GOOD GAME
NO IT'S NOT
YES IT IS!
"What we have here is a BRILLIANTLY ORIGINAL and witty interpretation of the Python Theme". Zero 89%
"One of the tastiest slices of alternative arcade action since Venezuelan Beaver Cheese". The One 85%
ATARI ST
AMIGA
SPECTRUM
COMMODORE 64
IBM PC
AMSTRAD
Virgin GAMES
©Python Productions 1990
℗Virgin Mastertronic Limited, 16 Portland Road, London, W11 4LA

Ivan 'IRONMAN' Stewart's SUPER OFF-ROAD RACER

It's a bit of a sad occasion this, readers, 'cos apparently *IronMan* is the last game that Graftgold are ever (ever) going to produce for the Speccy (well, probably). Boo hoo! So, not a minute too soon, RICH PELLEY leapt into a nearby souped-up Morris Marina pick-up and sped off to Essex (well, he took the train actually) to have a look-see before it was all too late...

IronMan's all about cars, right? (*Actually, it's all about giant four-wheel-drive pick-up trucks, but I'll let you off this time. Ed*) Oh... So here's a car 'joke' – what's the difference between a Skoda and a packet of banana Chewits? You can't unwrap, erm, drive, um, er, ooops. (I've forgotten the ruddy punchline.) Ahem. Let's start again.

I know, I'll tell you about the game, shall I? Ever heard of Ivan Stewart then? Nope, neither had I, but, apart from being some famous off-road racing driver or other, he's also the star of that spanking arcade game *Ivan 'IronMan' Stewart's Super Off-Road Racer*. And blow me down if Virgin haven't had those Graftgold people convert the thing to the humble Spectrum for them. (Yes, they have.) So let's take 'une boucherie', shall we?

A few goes later

It's all relatively simple really. You race four times around piles of different tracks (with a sort of bird's-eye view of the proceedings) against three other players (one of whom can be a chum or chumette) trying to, erm, win. Rather like *Supersprint* come to think of it, although this one's loads better because a) *Supersprint* had boring flat tracks whereas this one's got undulations a-go-go (and loads more besides) and b) *Supersprint* was (conversion-wise) crap, and this one isn't.

Of course, loads more happens when you're pegging it round the circuits. For instance, you can ram into everybody else to slow them down or even bump them off the edge of the tracks, meaning they'll have to go around again to complete the lap. Hee hee. But then again they can do the same back to you so you'd better look sharpish or you'll be for 'it' as well.

Whilst bombing it around the track you will no doubt zoom over bumps, up hills, down slopes, through puddles etc, meaning your truck will be wobbling about at different angles all over the place. For realism your vehicle sprite would really have to keep changing its shape accordingly to look 'right', and (spookily enough) that's exactly what happens. The computer looks at each of the four wheels of your pick-up individually and then decides which of the 112 (yes, 112) truck sprites it'd be best to use. So it all looks and feels very realistic indeed – one of the best points about the game.

The shop bit

Ooops – I forgot to mention the shop bit. Right, at the end of each race you get into this shop, erm, bit, where you can buy lots of 'accessories' such as nitro bursts, shock absorbers, tyres and a host of others things. Money to buy all these things



There are eight completely different tracks in all (just as in the arcade version), and here are six of them (in case you can't count). Mind you, during the course of the game you race round the whole lot in both directions so it sort of seems as if there are 16 in all. And you don't just rotate through them all either – you jump around between them. This means that you have to play the thing for ages before you get to see the whole lot.



IronMan, the original (ie the arcade game, clot).



Yep, you guessed it, the shop bit.



comes from winning the race, picking it up on the way round, or alternatively cashing in your credits. You start with five credits (so you can lose the race five times before finishing your go) but each one is also worth a certain amount of cash. So you could spend a credit on upgrading your car to increase your chance of winning the race, and win more money than if you hadn't bought the stuff in the first place, if you see what I mean. (Phew.)

Erm...

And there you go. It's all really simple, but really addictive all the same. I'm impressed. In fact, it's so flabbergasting that I can't actually think of anything else to write. Ahem. I know, let's have a quick chat with Steve Turner, the bloke who wrote it. (That's bound to fill up some space.)

HELLO, YOU MUST BE STEVE.

Yep.

So tell me then, Steve me old mucker, how did you go about converting *IronMan* to the humble Speccy?

Well, I got the original code from the arcade machine but that was no use (it was massively too long) so I had to rewrite it all myself (which took ages). We've got an arcade machine too, but that was too big to get in the office so we had to take it apart and stick it back together to get it in.

I was wondering what all that sellotape was for. Um, did you have to miss much out?

Well, yeah. Y'see, the original machine was extremely cunning because it would store the results of the top 100 players and then set the difficulty level accordingly. So you could play the game one day, come back a week or so later and then it'd be loads harder. Which isn't really very fair, is it? So I've scrapped that. Instead the IronMan (you have to beat him to avoid losing a credit – I think lyou forgot to mention that) gets better the more races he wins (if you see what I mean) – so it's all much fairer like that.

I've also done lots of complicated things to save memory – like storing the tracks a special way, cutting down on the variety of slopes and things, and loads more – but I won't bore you with the details (you probably wouldn't understand anyway).

True. Very true. So are you pleased with the finished thing?

Yep – I'm very pleased. It's a pity that I couldn't have made it a bit more colourful – but the Spectrum's so crap at that sort of thing it just wouldn't have worked. What can you do, eh? All the same, I reckon John Cummings did a spanking job on the graphics, don't you?

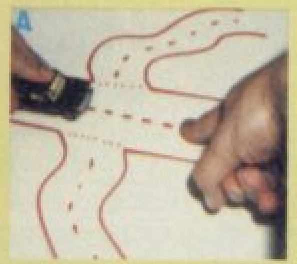
Oh, absolutely. But this is the last game that you, or indeed Graftgold, will be doing on the Spectrum, isn't it?

'Fraid so. Unless something huge comes up, that is. But let's hope not, eh, 'cos I've just binned my Spectrum to make room for a new flash Amiga. Hee hee.

Tch! What a scamp, eh, viewers?

A DOUBLE PHYSICS LESSON (WITH HOMEWORK) COURTESY OF *YOUR SINCLAIR*.

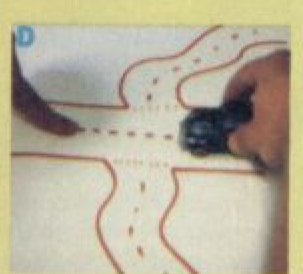
1 In *IronMan*, just as in real life, when you're going too fast around a corner you skid. But why? Well, Sir Isaac Newton concluded why absolutely ages ago (before they even had cars, in fact) and came up with the Law of Motion. Take it away, Izzy. "Every object continues in its state of rest or uniform motion in a straight line unless acted on by an external force." And look, here's a diagram to explain...







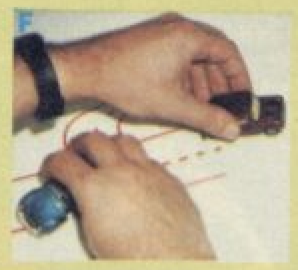
A *The car moves with uniform motion in a straight line.*
B *The car turns but continues moving in its original direction (ie it skids).*
C *The car moves with uniform motion in a new direction.*



2 Someone also once said (it could have been my Physics teacher actually), "Energy is neither created nor destroyed. It can only be transformed from one form to another." Or something. And good for him too, that's all I can say. So what that means is that if you're going really fast, and you bash into another car, then it'll go faster, and you'll slow down. I think another diagram is called for...

D *Car A moves with uniform motion.*
E *Car A hits Car B.*





F *Car A slows down and Car B speeds up – the kinetic energy is passed from the first car to the other.*



Right – the eighth and final course. Or the first and, erm, first course, I suppose. Sort of depends which way round you choose to play really, doesn't it? (Ooh, I can see right down her top from here!) (You're fired. Ed)



And here's another course. It's got... Cripes! She's pretty tasty, isn't she? (Oi! Concentrate on the screenshot. Ed) Yes, b-but... but... coooooor! (Oh good Lord. Take a hold of yourself, man. Ed)





FAX BOX

Game	Ivan 'IronMan' Stewart's Super Off-Road Racer
Publisher	Virgin
Programmers	Graftgold
Price	£9.99 cass/£14.99 disk
Release Date	End of the year

TWIN WORLD

UbiSoft/£9.99 cass/£14.99 disk

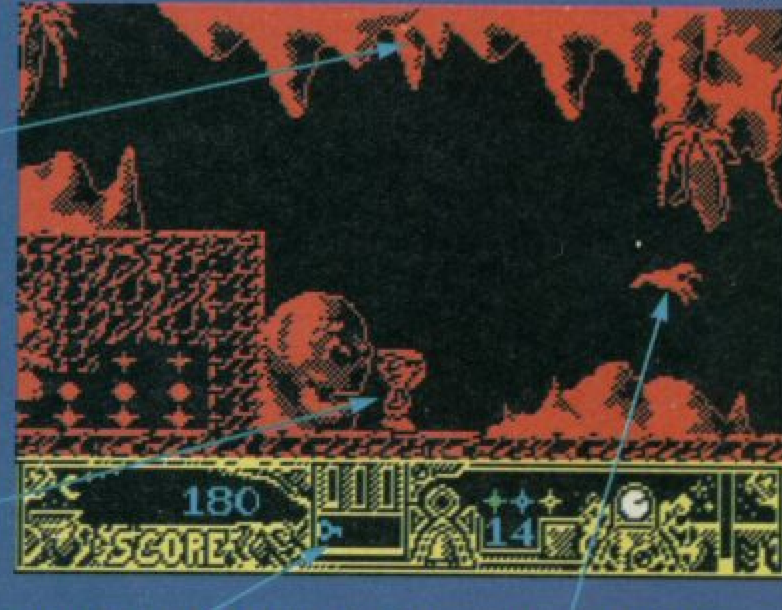


Jonathan "*Twin World* is a praiseworthy arcade game. Very attractive, humorous, beautiful, strategic, of a very good playability. It is provided with music and sound effects of extremely good quality creating a game of the highest interest."

Nothing like a quote from the instructions to kick off a review, eh, Spec-chums? It certainly saves a few headaches at this end, I can tell you. As you may have gathered, *Twin World* is a French game so we're probably in for a fair dose of the customary weirdness. It popped up on the 16-bit computers a while back, and went down a treat. So let's take a look at the plot, eh?

Right, the game is set in Twin World ("a very special world to be visited immediately" we're told) where there once lived a group of people called the Gaspards. They were looked after by another bunch of people called the Carikens, and everything was fine until one day an evil druid called Maldur (which translates from the French as Not Very Well Hard, I think) came along and invaded them. Most of the Carikens were slaughtered and their magic amulet was stolen, smashed up into 23 pieces and scattered around all over the place. You can probably guess what's coming next. Yup, you survived so now you've got to collect the pieces and save the world etc.

Load it up and you'll see a scrolling side-view jobby with a suspiciously cute little character (called Ulopa) who can walk about, jump, duck, stamp his feet and fire little blobs (from a choice of three different sorts). There's a nicely detailed, but monochromatic, landscape to wander around, platforms to jump onto, things to shoot and, of course, things to collect.

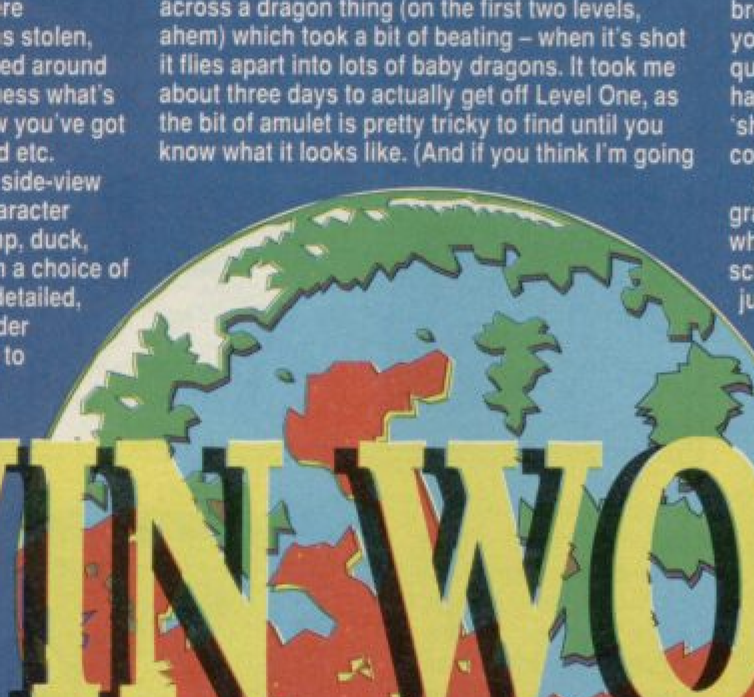


Twin World has some fairly okay-ish background graphics, but it's a pity they're all the same colour. This is the underground bit (a nice Hell-ish red) while upstairs it's a pretty yellow.

Here's our hero, the rather ludicrously-named Ulopa, a suspiciously cute little fellow with a big head, big feet and not much else. He fires little blob things (a choice of three sorts), though they tend to go all over the place a bit.

What's all this lot then? Well, it seems like we've got 180 points, one key, a bell (?), three star thingies, a clock and some, erm, other stuff. (I think).

Blimey! What on earth is that? (It seems to be some sort of flying banana skin or something.)



Nothing weird about that really. But hang on a minute, there's a door over there. Let's go through it. Oh crikey, the screen's changed colour and we seem to be underground or something. Very strange. Let's go through this door over here. Cor – we're back where we started, but a bit further on!

It turns out that what you've got to do is work your way through each level, flipping between the two 'worlds' when necessary, pick up a bit of the amulet and take it to the exit. Every four levels there's a big baddie to kill, but being as crap as ever I didn't quite get that far. I did, however, come across a dragon thing (on the first two levels, ahem) which took a bit of beating – when it's shot it flies apart into lots of baby dragons. It took me about three days to actually get off Level One, as the bit of amulet is pretty tricky to find until you know what it looks like. (And if you think I'm going to give you any clues, forget it. Why should I suffer alone?)

And there's another thing. When you shoot baddies you'll be able to collect add-ons, like extra-high-jumps and things. These need to be brought into action at key points in the game, but you may occasionally find that you haven't got quite what you need at various points. If this happens you're meant to be able to conjure up a 'shop' where things like this can be bought. But could I figure out how to make it work? Nope.

So is *Twin World* actually any good? Well, the graphics are. They're only in one colour, mind, but what's there is neatly drawn and smoothly scrolling. The only slight problem is that it can be just a little bit tricky to tell what's going on at times. For instance, it's a bit hard to tell the difference between water and solid ground. One kills you and the other doesn't, which is quite an important distinction when you think about it. And there's the sound, which consists of quite a good tune and some neat spot effects. But apart from all that, is it actually worth looking at? Yes, to be quite honest. It's extremely playable, the speed everything happens at is just about right and there's enough variety to keep things rolling along nicely. It is possible to crash it, though, if you go off the right-hand side of the first level. Oops.

In fact, I've just got onto Level Three, so I'm going to give it an even higher rating than I originally had in mind. I'm that chuffed.



Hurrah! It looks like Ulopa's found a picnic table. It must be time to stop the quest and have a quick snack instead!



Watch out for that little demon thing on the bottom right there – he's very hard to kill and tricky to jump over or avoid.



finalverdict

LIFE EXPECTANCY	GRAPHICS	ADDICTIVENESS
80°	74°	80°

DIAGNOSIS

A straightforward but extremely enjoyable little number which grows on you until it almost bursts.

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PROGRAM PITSTOP





He's sexier than Senna, madder than Mansell and pretty porkin' pluckier than Prost. His name is JONATHAN DAVIES and this is his column (oo-er).

Gerbils, eh? Mine just won't keep the noise down, and I haven't slept in weeks. No matter though. We've masses to get through this month so let's check out the starting grid.

In pole position is **Rick O'Neill** with another of his earth-shattering scrollers – *Distorted*, er, *Scroller*. Close behind him is **Daniel Cannon** with the wacky sampler you've all been waiting for. And bringing up the rear it's, well, **me** actually. With a hex loader. (Just thought it'd clarify a thing or two for the terminally thick among you. Nice, eh?)

Right. Vroom. Here we go.

DISTORTED SCROLLER

by Rick O'Neill

Oh blimey, surely not another scroller? But wait! This one's a real cracker. Not only does it scroll the message of your choice across the middle of the screen, but it also wobbles it up and down and ripples rainbow colours across it. All at the same time. (Now I can see you're interested.) It's been written by none other than Rick 'I've Got The Scrolls Real Bad' O'Neill, the chap who wrote *Swiss Scroll* back in the June issue. He's obviously into these things pretty heavily.

The Procedure

The program's an absolute doddle to get working. Just type in the Basic listing (using stars or something instead of those funny crossed-out O's in lines 120 and 130 – they're just my printer being crap) and SAVE "SCROLLER" LINE 10. Now load up the Hex Loader and use it to type in the hex listing, specifying 64512 as the start address and SCROLLER as the filename. Save the resulting code after the Basic, reload it and watch the amazing demo. Not bad at all, eh?

cont.

Basic Section

```
   5 RUN 100
  10 CLEAR 64511: LOAD "SCROLLER
"CODE
  15 CLS : PRINT AT 8,9;"CREATIN
G TABLE"
  20 LET S=(360/128)/(180/PI)
  25 LET AN=1.57: LET Y1=23
  30 FOR X=0 TO 63
  35 LET Y=INT (SIN (AN)*24): LE
T YD=(Y>Y1)-(Y1>Y): LET Y1=Y
  40 PLOT X,Y+24
  45 POKE 65407-X,-YD
  50 POKE 65280+X,YD
  55 POKE 65408+X,YD
  60 POKE 65535-X,-YD
  65 LET AN=AN+S: NEXT X
  70
  80
  90
 100 POKE 23693,4: BORDER 0: CLS

 105 LET BOLD=1: POKE 64878,15 A
ND BOLD
 110 PLOT 6,113: DRAW 0,-67: DRA
W 243,0: DRAW 0,67: DRAW -243,0
 111 REM
 112 REM
 115 REM SET UP SCROLL STRING
 116 REM
 117 REM
 120 LET L$="YOUR SINCLAIR øøøø
      PRESENTS   øø     THE DIST
ORTED SCROLLER        COPYRIGHT 19
90 BY RICK O'NEILLøøø      CURREN
T VERSION COMPLETED    11:06 am O
N THURSDAY THE 17th OF MAY, 1990
!     "
 130 LET L$=L$+"  HELLO TO MISS
  KAREN COX   øøøø    WELL, THAT
'S ALL FOR THIS SCROLLER . . . R
EPEATSVILLE!       "+CHR$ 255
 131 REM
 132 REM
 135 REM     DRAW SCREEN
 136 REM
 137 REM
 140 BRIGHT 1: LET I=7
 150 FOR A=1 TO 30 STEP 2
 160 PRINT AT 8,A; INK I;"  "
 170 LET I=I+1-(7 AND I=7)
 180 NEXT A
 190 PRINT AT 3,6; PAPER 1; INK
6;" DISTORTED SCROLLER ";AT 2,6;
TAB 26;AT 4,6;TAB 26; PAPER 0; I
NK 5;''TAB 9;"WRIT BY WRICK!"
 200 PRINT AT 18,3; INK 3;"YOU C
AN USE IT IF YOU WANT"''"   BUT
PLEASE GIVE ME CREDIT!"
 201 REM
 202 REM
 203 REM   START THE SCROLLER
 204 REM
 205 REM
 210 RANDOMIZE USR 64512
 211
 212
 213
 214
9998 GO TO 10000
9999 SAVE "DISTORTED" LINE 10: P
OKE 23736,181: SAVE "SCROLLER"CO
DE 64512,420
```

Hex Section

```
64512 C3 D1 FC DD 21 33 FF 21 =1249
64520 01 4D 11 00 FE 01 00 0F =365
64528 DD 7E 00 FE FF 20 10 24 =940
64536 7C E6 07 20 08 7C D6 08 =747
64544 67 7D C6 20 6F 18 11 A7 =777
64552 28 0E 7C 25 E6 07 20 08 =492
64560 7C C6 08 67 7D D6 20 6F =915
64568 79 A7 20 04 22 08 FC 0C =630
64576 C5 D5 E5 01 20 00 36 00 =726
64584 23 36 00 28 24 7C E6 07 =529
64592 20 08 7C D6 08 67 7D C6 =812
64600 20 6F 3E 08 08 1A 77 23 =401
64608 13 1A 77 2B 1B 24 7C E6 =624
64616 07 20 08 7C D6 08 67 7D =621
64624 C6 20 6F 1A 77 23 13 1A =566
64632 77 2B 1B 24 7C E6 07 20 =618
64640 08 7C D6 08 67 7D C6 20 =812
64648 6F EB 09 EB 08 3D 20 CC =895
64656 77 23 77 E1 D1 C1 DD 2D =1166
64664 23 23 13 13 05 C2 10 FC =575
64672 3A 05 FC D6 01 32 05 FC =837
64680 21 A3 FD 35 C0 36 05 21 =786
64688 01 59 06 1E 7E 3D E6 07 =550
64696 20 01 2F AE E6 07 AE 77 =784
64704 23 10 F1 21 01 59 11 21 =465
64712 59 01 DF 00 ED B0 C9 4C =1003
64720 24 2A 5D 5C E5 21 CF FC =984
64728 22 5D 5C 7E CD B2 28 D1 =977
64736 ED 53 5D 5C D8 23 23 23 =826
64744 22 4C FD 21 A2 FD 22 03 =848
64752 FD 21 00 FE 11 01 FE 01 =813
64760 FF 00 75 ED B0 CD 03 FC =1245
64768 3E 0A 11 FF 62 21 FF FE =984
64776 08 CB 16 08 2B 3E FD BC =787
64784 20 F6 3E 7F DB FE CB 47 =1214
64792 20 01 C9 3A 01 FD 3D 32 =657
64800 01 FD C2 FD FC 3E 10 32 =1081
64808 01 FD 1A 13 A7 C8 FE 7C =1044
64816 20 15 D5 06 40 C5 01 00 =534
64824 02 0B 78 B1 20 FB CD 03 =801
64832 FC C1 10 F1 D1 18 E3 FE =1416
64840 FF 20 05 11 DE 62 3E 20 =723
64848 ED 53 03 FD 6F 26 00 29 =766
64856 29 29 ED 5B 36 5C 19 D9 =798
64864 E5 21 1E FE 11 1F 00 D9 =811
64872 16 FD 06 08 7E 4F 0F B1 =686
64880 4F 0F 0F 0F 0F E6 0F C6 =582
64888 93 5F 1A D9 77 23 D9 79 =977
64896 E6 0F C6 93 5F 1A D9 77 =1047
64904 19 D9 23 10 DF D9 E1 D9 =1175
64912 C3 FD FC 00 03 0C 0F 30 =778
64920 33 3C 3F C0 C3 CC CF F0 =1212
64928 F3 FC FF 01 00 00 00 00 =751
STOP"
```

To use the scroller in your own programs, all you have to do is put the string you want to scroll into L$ and RANDOMIZE USR 64512 to 'hit it'. As well as the usual letters and numbers there are three special characters you can use...
CHR$ 124 – This pauses the scroller for half a wave, leaving the message bouncing up and down. Multiple use will allow you to stop it for as long as you like.
CHR$ 255 – Repeat from the beginning.
CHR$ 0 – Stop. The scroller can also be halted by pressing Space, except when it has been paused with CHR$ 124.

Line 105 in the Basic program contains the variable BOLD. Setting this to 0 turns bold off, and setting it to 1 turns it on. And if you don't like what happens to the colour, POKE 64680,201, and with 33 to turn it back on. Address 64686 holds the speed of the colour cycling, which is initially set to 5.

A SAMPLER THAT WORKS

by Daniel Cannon

And I know it does because I've heard it. You may remember there was another sampler in Pitstop a year or two ago, and you may also be one of the people who sent an angry letter of complaint in when you found it didn't work (the probability that you are is approximately one in three). The problems were due to a hitch at our end rather than anything to do with the program itself, but as it was a bit beyond repair I've decided to print this one by Daniel Cannon (of *Minstrel* fame) in the hope that it'll pacify you all a bit. It works, and what's more it's extremely good.

Instructions

To avoid the risk of another hex dump disaster, the program's in Basic, with lots of nice Data statements for you to type in. So bash it in and save it with SAVE "Sampler" LINE 10. Run it, wait for it to sort out the machine code and you'll be presented with a line moving slowly across the bottom of the screen. Now try playing some music or something through the ear socket from your tape deck. Behold! The line moves up and down, drawing a graph of the input. Now, if you press R, sound will be recorded into the computer's memory for about five and a half seconds. Then press P to play it back. Amazing, eh? You can also change the length of the sample recorded by pressing T and typing in a number of bytes. This number is calculated as the number of seconds' recording time multiplied by 5500 (so use 11000 for two seconds). And you can load and save samples so that they can be used in your own programs.

To use samples in your own programs, you'll need a CLEAR 32767 statement, a LOAD "" CODE 32768 to load in your sample and a RANDOMIZE USR 32829 to play it. Samples are saved with a copy of the playback routine built in, which is pretty handy. You can also change the length of the sample from within your program by doing POKE 32834,time-256*INT(time/256) : POKE 32835, INT (time/256). Do this lots of times for the old N-N-N-Nineteen effect and all that sort of rubbish.

The Program

```
   1 REM Spectrum Sound Sampler,
   2 REM by Daniel Cannon, 1990.
  10 BORDER 0: PAPER 0: INK 7: C
LEAR 32767: PRINT "Reading data,
 please wait..."
  20 LET tot=0: LET num=1: FOR a
=32768 TO 32768+103: READ dat: P
OKE a,dat: LET tot=tot+dat*num:
NEXT a: IF tot<>11438 THEN  PRIN
T "ERROR!": STOP
  30 DATA 243,175,1,0,0,17,196,9
,219,254
  35 DATA 230,64,184,40,2,71,12,
27,122,179
  40 DATA 32,242,6,0,203,57,251,
201,243,33
  45 DATA 104,128,17,152,127,6,8
,219,254,7
  50 DATA 230,128,182,119,203,62
,0,0,0,0
  55 DATA 0,16,240,35,27,122,179
,32,232,251
  60 DATA 201,243,33,104,128,17,
152,127,6,8
  65 DATA 126,7.7,7,7,230,16,211
,254,175
  70 DATA 211,254,203,14,16,240,
35,27,122,179
  75 DATA 32,232,58,72,92,15,15,
15,230,7
  80 DATA 211,254,251,201,0,0,0,
0,0,0
  90 POKE 23658,0: LET start=327
68: LET max=32664: LET time=max:
 BORDER 1: PAPER 1: INK 7: CLS :
 PRINT AT 8,5; PAPER 5; INK 0;"S
PECTRUM SOUND SAMPLER";AT 11,4;
PAPER 2; INK 7;"WRITTEN BY DANIE
L CANNON": PAUSE 1: PAUSE 100
 100 CLS : PRINT AT 0,5; PAPER 5
; INK 0;"SPECTRUM SOUND SAMPLER"
: PRINT  INK 6'"Hold";TAB 12;"Re
cord";TAB 28;"Play"'"Save";TAB 1
3;"Time";TAB 28;"Load": GO SUB 3
00
 110 PLOT 0,0: DRAW 255,0: DRAW
-4,4: DRAW 0,-4: PLOT 0,0: DRAW
0,135: DRAW 4,-4: DRAW -4,0
 120 INK 5: FOR a=8 TO 248: PLOT
 a,8: DRAW 0,USR start: IF INKEY
$<>"" THEN  LET a$=INKEY$: GO SU
B 200
 130 NEXT a: INK 7: GO TO 100
 200 IF a$="h" THEN  PAUSE 1: PA
USE 0
 210 IF a$="r" THEN  RANDOMIZE U
SR (start+28)
 220 IF a$="p" THEN  POKE start+
66,time-256*INT (time/256): POKE
 start+67,INT (time/256): RANDOM
IZE USR (start+61)
 230 IF a$="s" THEN  INPUT INKEY
$: SAVE "SAMPLE"CODE 32768,102+t
ime: GO TO 300
 240 IF a$="t" THEN  INPUT "Time
 (to ";(max);"): ";time: LET tim
e=INT time: LET time=time+(max A
ND time=0): GO SUB 300: IF time>
max THEN  GO TO 240
 250 IF a$="l" THEN  LOAD ""CODE
 32768
 260 RETURN
 300 PRINT #1;"Time: ";time;TAB
30; PAPER 2;"DC": RETURN
 400 SAVE "Sampler" LINE 1: PRIN
T "Verify": VERIFY "Sampler": PR
INT "OK": STOP
```

HEXLOADING

THE SECRET OF SUCCESS

This is a Hex Loader...

```
  10 REM General Hex Loader
  20 POKE 23658,8
  30 INPUT "Start Address: ";sta
rt
  40 POKE USR "a",INT (start/256
): POKE USR "a"+1,start-256*INT
(start/256)
  50 CLEAR start-1
  60 LET start=256*PEEK USR "a"+
PEEK (USR "a"+1)
  70 INPUT "File Name: "; LINE f
$
  80 LET q=start
  90 LET cs=0
 100 PRINT AT 0,0;"Address ";q
 110 INPUT (q);": "; LINE a$
 120 IF a$=CHR$ 226 THEN  GO TO
320
 130 IF LEN a$<>16 THEN  GO TO 3
70
 140 LET f=0: FOR j=1 TO 16
 150 IF (a$(j)<"0" OR a$(j)>"9")
 AND (a$(j)<"A" OR a$(j)>"F") TH
EN  LET f=1
 160 NEXT j
 170 IF f=1 THEN  GO TO 370
 180 FOR n=0 TO 7
 190 LET y=CODE a$(1)-48: IF Y>9
 THEN  LET y=y-7
 200 LET z=CODE a$(2)-48: IF z>9
 THEN  LET z=z-7
 210 LET va=16*y+z
 220 LET cs=cs+va
 230 POKE q+n,va
 240 PRINT AT 2,n*3;a$( TO 2)
 250 LET a$=a$(3 TO )
 260 NEXT n
 270 INPUT "Checksum: "; LINE a$
 280 PRINT AT 2,25;a$
 290 IF VAL a$<>cs THEN  GO TO 3
70
 300 CLS
 310 LET q=q+8
 315 GO TO 90
 320 CLS : PRINT ''"REMOVE EAR LE
AD, THEN START TAPEAND PRESS ANY
 KEY TO SAVE CODE"
 330 PAUSE 0: POKE 23736,181: SA
VE f$CODE start,q-start
 340 CLS : PRINT "VERIFYING..."
 350 VERIFY f$CODE
 360 CLS : PRINT "OK.": PAUSE 0:
 STOP
 370 PRINT AT 15,0;"ERROR": BEEP
 .1,-20: GO TO 90
```

And to use it do the following...
1 Type it in, save it to tape and run it.
2 Locate a likely-looking hex dump.
3 When asked for the Start Address, enter the first number in the dump.
4 When asked for the Filename, use the one in the instructions if one is given.
5 One by one you'll be given a series of addresses corresponding to the numbers down the left-hand side of the hex dump. Next to each of these, type in the list of characters on that line of the dump (but *don't put the spaces in* – these are there to make it easier to read) and press Enter. Now enter the checksum.
6 The line you just typed should be printed across the top of the screen and you'll be prompted for the next line. If the program says 'Error' you've mistyped a character or two. Don't worry, just type the line in again. (If the program says anything else, you're doing it all wrong. Start again from the beginning.)
7 Repeat for each line of the hex dump.
8 When you get to the bottom, where it says STOP, press Symbol Shift and A and then press Enter. The hex will be saved to tape, and you've done it!

So there we are then. Will next month be as successful? Only you can decide. Send anything you've come up with program-wise, on a tape, to Jonathan Davies, Program Pitstop, *Your Sinclair*, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW.

HOW 2 HACK

Well, he's been promising you it for months, but here, at last, is JON NORTH with a complete run-down on how to crack the Firebird Bleepload. Stand by your disassemblers – this is going to be tricky...

The First Stage

As with any protection system, you'll need a copy of a game with the Bleepload on it (cracking it may be a bit difficult otherwise). As an example, I'll be cracking *Beach Buggy*, but all the other Bleepload games are almost identical, so any one will do.

The Basic Bit

First off, *Load the basic loader Buggy LINE 10 LEN 179. When *Loaded, *List it...

```
10 REM
20 CLEAR 25500
30 BORDER 0: PAPER 0: INK 0: CLS
40 PRINT AT 1,9; PAPER 1; INK 7;
" BEACH BUGGY "
50 LOAD "Buggy1"CODE 52480
60 RANDOMIZE USR 52480
```

The Loader (The Juicy Bit)

Load the next block (the loading system) into 52480 and disassemble it. 52480 is CD00 hex. Following the code down from CD00, we see a JP (HL) at CD58. Normally you would put a breakpoint over the JP, but JP (HL) is a one-byte instruction, and a breakpoint takes three bytes. What you do in this situation is put a breakpoint over the previous instruction, as long as you have three spare bytes. The first instruction you can do this on is the LD (FF15),A at CD54. Put a breakpoint here and JP to CD00. When control returns to the disassembler, inspect the Z80 registers to find the value of HL (ie, where the JP will JP to). It is FF0A; disassemble this and we see it holds the instruction JP CD1B, which will go back and load another block. Put a breakpoint at CD1B and continue (so you can now put a second breakpoint at CD54).The next time control returns, HL=FF06 which is again another JP CD1B. This will keep going on forever, or until HL holds an instruction other than JP CD1B. Rather than repeating the procedure of running and executing breakpoints, we will write a simple routine which will do it for us.

```
LD (FF15),A
INC HL
LD A,(HL)
DEC HL
CP 1B
RET Z
<breakpoint>
```

Taking one instruction at a time... LD (FF15),A is simply a copy of the three bytes we are overwriting (at CD54) by passing control to our routine. INC HL makes HL equal to the address of the first of the two bytes of the JP address (HL originally holds the value of an address containing C3, which is Z80 code for JP). LD A,(HL) makes A equal to the contents of HL (remember the brackets), ie the first byte of the JP address. DEC HL returns HL to its original value. CP 1B stands for ComPare 1B, ie does A equal 1B? RET Z stands for RETurn if Zero, ie return back to the loader if A=1B. This routine can be placed anywhere in memory, but I will put it at CCA0, because it is close to the loader and so is unlikely to get loaded over. It is possible that it could, in which case we would have to start again (but putting the routine somewhere else). The final stage is to put a CALL CCA0 at CD54 (in place of the breakpoint) and return control to the loader. Control is returnea to the disassembler after 2E has loaded. HL is FF08, which reads JP 5D00. Disassemble this...

```
5D00 PUSH IX
5D02 CALL CD6E
5D05 CALL CE2A
5D08 CP (HL)
5D09 JR Z,5D12
5D0B LD B,0
5D0D CALL CE7E
5D10 JR 5D02
5D12 DI5D13 POP HL
5D14 LD L,0
5D16 LD DE,(FEE7)
5D1A LD A,(DE)
5D1B XOR (HL)
5D1C INC H
5D1D XOR (HL)
5D1E DEC H
5D1F LD (DE),A
5D20 INC L
5D21 INC E
5D22 JR NZ,5D1
```

A5D00 to 5D10 looks like it will load another block (CD6E, CE2A and CE7E are all in the loading system). The routine 5D1A-5D23 is a decrypter, which you can see by the use of brackets in LD A,(DE) and, more importantly, LD (DE),A. However, we do not know where it decrypts, as DE has a value of the contents of FEE7 and FEE8 (which may be loaded in that last block), so put a breakpoint at 5D1A and JP CD57. (This is where we broke control from the loading system, and is therefore where control needs to be returned to. Rule number one – always cover your tracks!) When control comes back to you, DE=C900. The decrypter finishes when E=0, so this decrypter changes the code from C900-C9FF, and DE will equal CA00 after it. Continuing the disassembly...

```
5D24 LD DE,(FEE7)
5D28 LD HL,5D40
5D2B LD A,(DE)
5D2C XOR (HL)
5D2D LD (HL),A
5D2E INC E
5D2F INC L
5D30 JR NZ,5D2B
5D32 LD HL,0
5D35 LD (5CB0),A
5D38 LD A,2
5D3A LD (5C6B),A
```

This is all that can be disassembled at this stage, because the routine 5D24-5D31 decrypts 5D40-5DFF. Put a breakpoint at 5D3A and continue.

```
5D3D LD DE,(FEE7)
5D41 LD HL,(FEE9)
5D44 LD A,(DE)
5D45 XOR (HL)
5D46 LD (HL),A
5D47 INC HL
5D48 LD B,B
5D49 JR NZ,5D44
5D4B LD A,(FEEC)
5D4E CP H
5D4F JR NZ,5D44
```

Before we carry on the disassembly, put a breakpoint at 5D44 and continue, because HL=(FEE9) which could be a couple of bytes after the decrypter. When control returns, however, HL=CF00 which is nowhere near the area in memory we are concentrating on. Therefore, although we didn't need to put a breakpoint there, at least we definitely know we are safe.

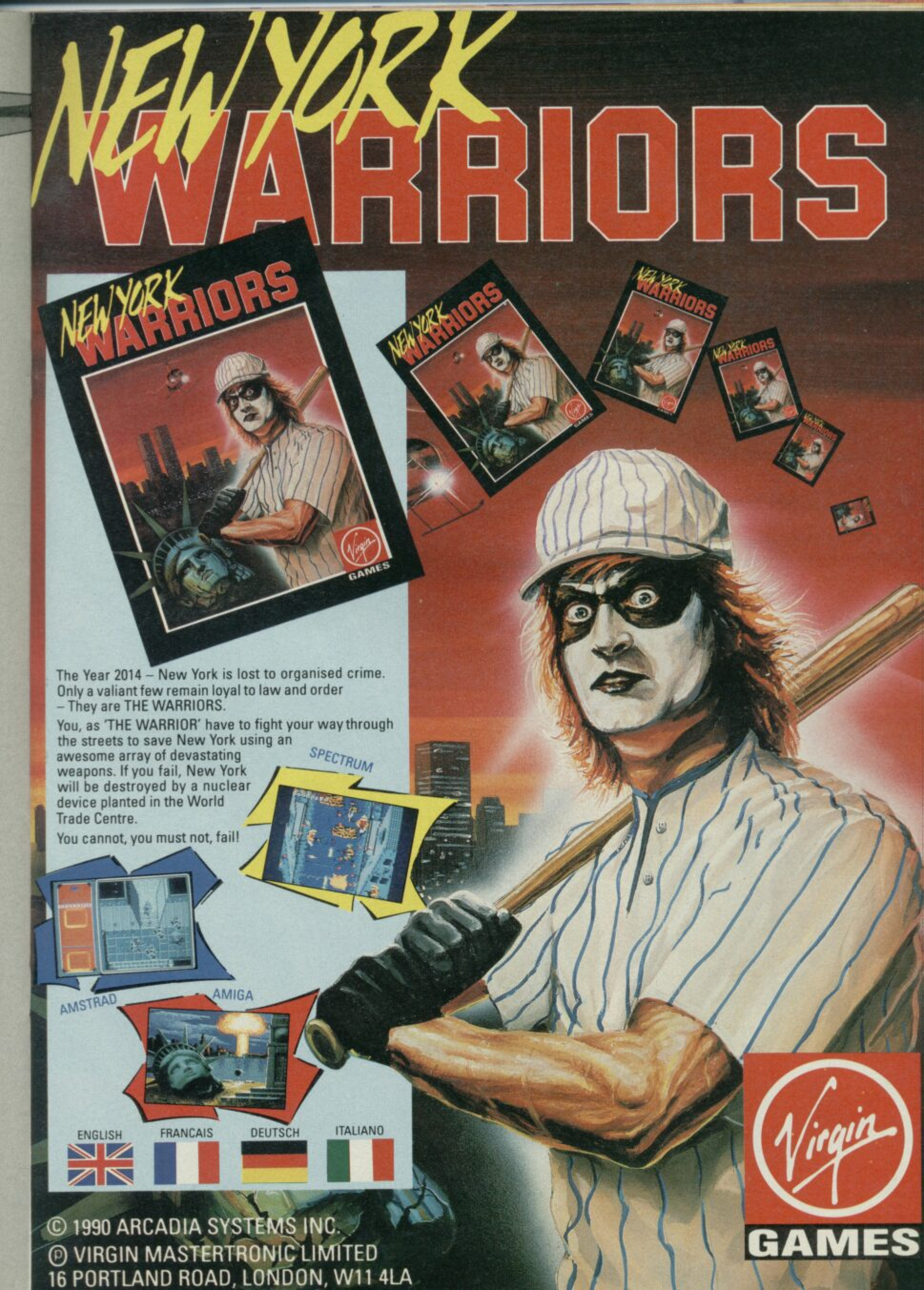
```
5D51 LD HL,CF00
5D54 LD DE,4000
5D57 LD BC,1B00
5D5A LDIR
5D5C LD HL,EA00
5D5F LD DE,6300
5D62 LD BC,1000
5D65 LDIR
5D67 LD A,3D
5D69 LD BC,7
5D6C LD DE,6
5D6F CALL FA00
5D72 LD SP,63BF
5D75 EI
5D76 CALL 28E
5D79 JR Z,5D98
5D7B LD A,D
5D7C SUB E
5D7D CP 21
5D7F JR NZ,5D98
```

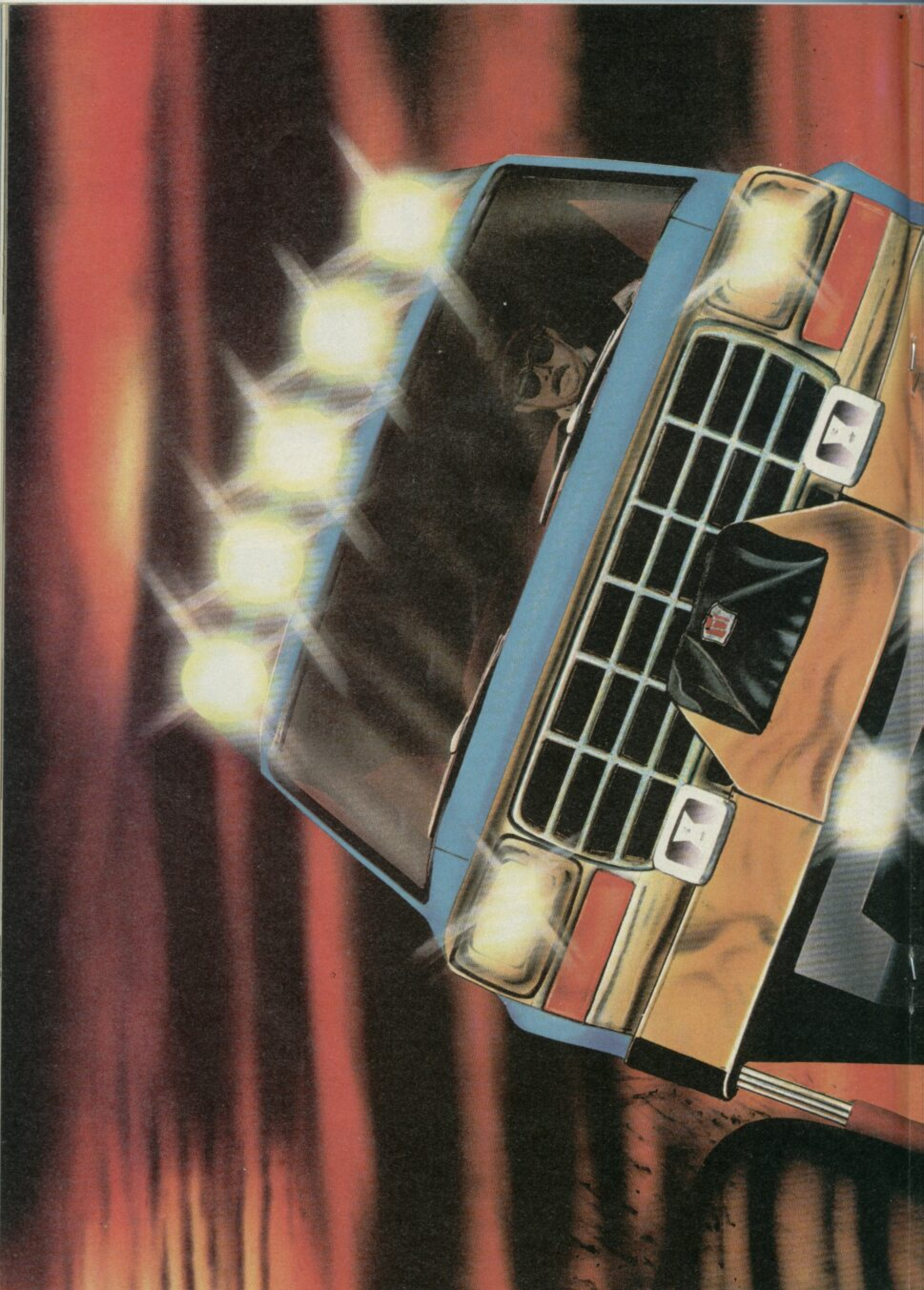
5D51 to 5D66 moves a couple of chunks of code around (including the screen). 5D67-5D71 must obviously load the rest of the game (it is the only CALL to somewhere other than the ROM). 5D72-5D80 sets up the stack and interrupts (unimportant as far as we are concerned) and JPs to 5D98 (in the unlikely event that the JR at 5D79 is ignored, the one at 5D7F will definitely be executed). Disassembling 5D98 (where it JPs to) 5D98 JP B1FB.

That's it! We've cracked Bleepload! You can move the POKEs you've got to 5D98 from your hacking routine, and end them with a JP B1FB to start the game. Or, if you're actually doing some serious hacking with the game, you can put the NEW routine I gave you last month at 5D98, so the game will load and then NEW, so enabling you to hack it.

Wasn't That Exciting?

Your very first "commercial" crack, eh? Pretty darn mega, I'd say. Today, Bleepload... tomorrow, Barclays! (Mmm. See you in court, Jon. Ed) *Remember, if there are any queries you've got hack-wise, or indeed anything you don't quite follow in the column, do me drop a line at How 2 Hack,* Your Sinclair, *30 Monmouth Street, Bath, Avon BA1 2BW. Enclose a stamped addressed envelope and you'll certainly get a reply, don't and you certainly won't. Catch you next month.*


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NEW YORK WARRIORS
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COMPO WINNERS

It's been a while, eh, readers? But don't fret, because here's a list of winners going back to, erm, crikey! November 1989! (Half of us weren't even born then.)

BRIXTON BRIEFCASES

Way, way back in November last year we offered you a whopping collection of stereos and things. There were two first prizes – shoulder-endangeringly large, (barely) portable stereos, and they go to **Ann Grant** from Bossington in Somerset, and **Andrew Morris** from Warrington in Cheshire. Lucky them, eh?

But **Jason Bennet** from Croydon and **Terry Watts** from Reigate, Surrey don't go away empty-handed. They'll get some almost-as-huge stereos, as will **A Danek** from Bracknell and **Mark Randle** from Barnsley, S Yorks (who'll get some slightly smaller ones still).

An assortment of personal stereo-type things go to **B Shimmings** from St Leonards in E Sussex, **Peter Jones** from Kings Norton in Birmingham, **Richard Payne** from Exeter and **Richard Smith** from Basildon, Essex.

BIG RED TESTIE

They had to lever our fingers off that massive red Testarossa with a crowbar, but it was finally bundled off to **Ian Taylor** of Lanchester in Durham, the winner of the compo in the January ish.

Runners-up prizes of a few slightly smaller (but no less desirable) vehicles go to **Robert Hyde** from Stockport in Cheshire, **Jason Mann** from Borehamwood in Herts and **J Martinez** from Rotherham in S Yorks.

CASTLE PARCEL

First prize in May's *Castle Master* compo was a ridiculously big Sony portable stereo with a CD player, and the lucky recipient of that is **Sean Lacey** from Lawersabfrfeldy (choke) in Perthshire.

Runners-up, who'll wake up in the morning to find a *Castle Master* mobile suspended above their beds, are **Thomas Etheridge** from London, **Geoffrey Tearle** from St Albans, **Martin Henderson** from Baltasound in the Shetland Isles, **Matthew Duggan** from St Austell, **Luke Baines** from Narberth, Dyfed, **Del Wood** from Peckham, London, **Andrew Ginningham** from Stirling, **Warren Butcher** from Surrey, **Glen Freeman** from Creetings St Mary near Ipswich, **Andy Mendryn** from Ipswich, **M Kidd** from Bromsgrove, **John Lane** from Peterborough, **Chris Robinson** from Milnthorpe, Cumbria, **Chris Parry** from Cheslyn Hay, **Lee Perry** from Plymouth, **P Chapman** also from Plymouth, **David Forbes** from Swansea, **Gary O'Neil** from Portishead, Bristol, **Julian Ooi** from Skirlaugh and finally **Peter Taylor** from Barnsley in S Yorks.

DON'T GET ALL E-MOTIONAL

The total amount of heat generated by everyone counting up all those snooker balls in the April issue probably could have fuelled the whole of Macclesfield for a week. The winner, though, was **Leslie Ward** from Manchester, whose letterbox willl have to cope with a complete snooker table with accessories.

The runners-up, who'll each find themselves possessed of a copy of *E-Motion*, are **Graeme Hedges** from Durham, **Robert Oyston** from Cambridge, **Mark Murphy** from Bolton, **Alexander Birdsall** from Totnes in Devon, **John Pagan** from Barrow-in-Furness, **Stuart Harris** from Coatbridge, **Claire Tennet** from Wallsend, Tyne and Wear, **Ryan Ellett** from Prescot, Merseyside, **Dean Frecknall** from Southampton and **Stephen Telfer** from Telford, Shropshire.

UNCONTAINAMOLE

Never look a gift mole in the mouth, especially when a fabulous Multi-Gym is on offer. **Mario Bufo** from Chatham in Kent will soon be bursting out of his clothing, as he's the winner of the body-building equipment on offer.

And, what's more, 25 copies of *Impossamole* go to the following people – **Dylan Russell** from Cheltenham, Glos, **Aston Brooker** from Hemel Hempstead, Herts, **James Boyle** from Kidderminster, Worcs, **Shaun Bailey** from Nechells in Birmingham, **J Bragg** from Ilford, Essex, **Tom Gerrard** from Prestwich, Manchester, **Huw Evans** from Newport, Gwent, **Michael Wood** from Clitheroe, Lancashire, **Stephen Bancroft** from Wakefield, West Yorks, **Simon Ryan** from Norwich, **Paul Nicol** from Redhill, Surrey, **Peter Tinsley** from St Helens, Merseyside, **George Jackson** from Hawick, Roxburghshire, **B Shimmings** from St Leonards-on-Sea, E Sussex, **Richard Booth** from St Annes-on-Sea, Lancashire, **James Lowery** from Harrogate, **Chris Fagan** from Runcorn, Cheshire, **Kevin Higginson** from Shirwell, Devon, **Wyn Gravelle** from Carmarthen, Dyfed, **Matthew Passmore** from Barnstaple, N Devon, **John Lane** from Peterborough, **Helen Williamson** from Elgin, Moram, **Jonathan Wilkins** from Croyden, Surrey, **Ken Knowles** from Dalmally, Argyle and (gasp) **Brian Hughes** from Broxburn, West Lothian.

TELESCOPIC THINGIES

Girlies in Scotland had better keep their curtains drawn from now on – **Robin Hislop** from Kilmaurs in Ayrshire won the telescope on offer in our *Dan Dare III* compo, and who knows what he'll do with it? He also gets a copy of the game.

Dan Dare III will also be winging its way to the following runners up – **Owen Massey** from Bristol, **Martin Wright** from Plymouth, **Nicholas Murray** from Largs in Ayrshire, **Chris Wood** from Morchington in Staffs, **Steven Whitley** from Stockton-on-Tees, Cleveland, **Alistair May** from Elgin, Moray, **Gwynn Thomas** from Helston in Cornwall, **Richard Dewey** from Woodhouse (sit!) in Sheffield, **Andrew Wildman** from Bedford, **M Penistone** from Sheffield, **Eddie Banks** from Selly Oak, Birmingham, **Chris Wright** from Totnes, S Devon, **Mark Butson** from Tavistock, Devon, **Laura MacKensie** from Bury, **Christine Ferre** from Havant, Hants, **Garry Brighton** from Newmarket in Suffolk, **Robert Gardner** from Poulton-Le-Fylde in Lancashire, **Paul Gosney** from Bristol and **S Swankie** from Motherwell, Lanarkshire.

IN-GER-LAND!

First prize in this one goes to **Craig Wilkinson** from Acomb in York who'll receive a remote control colour telly to watch, erm, the next World Cup on. (We are talking May here.)

And the runners-up, who'll each get a copy of (ahem) *World Cup Soccer '90*, are **Nicholas Lakeman** from Middlesborough, Cleveland, **Steven McDade** from Mentrie, Clackmannanshire (er, where?), **Glen Walker** from Dunstable, Beds, **Mark Alexander** from Glasgow, **Ian Felgate** from Stone in Staffs, **Mark Smith** from Hampton, Middlesex, **Robert Leyland Jr** from Birkenhead, Merseyside, **Phillip Hemmings** from Attleborough, Norfolk, **Craig O'Neill** from Salford, Lancashire, **Stuart Marr** from Sunderland, Tyne and Wear, **Mark Fisher** from Welling, Kent and **Neil Brown** from Newark, Notts.

PIPED TO THE POST

We're going to be hearing some serious sounds coming from Stourbridge, West Midlands very shortly as **Paul Hulland** has picked up the CD hi-fi from June's compo.

He'll also get a free copy of *Pipe Mania*, as will 20 runners-up, who'll each receive a T-shirt. And they are **C Stephens** from Macclesfield in Cheshire, **A Holden** from London, **Steven Wynn** from Cheltenham, **Phillip Beavis** from Cramlington, Northumberland, **Luke Baines** from Narberth, Dyfed, **James McCabe** from Healey Batley, West Yorks, **Stephen Taylor** from Stoke-on-Trent, **Russell Todd** from Brechin Angus in Scotland, **Jason Eyre** from Congleton, Cheshire, **R Dinatale** from London, **Paul Hickey** from Worcester Park, Surrey, **Roger A Mody** from Droylsden, **Martin Robinson** from York, **Callum Kinstree** from Lochmaben, Dumfriesshire, **Mrs G Lawrence** from Pontyclun, Mid Glamorgen, **Michael Woods** from Bolton, **Matthew Gadd** from Epsom Downs, Surrey, **Andrew Gavin** from Cockermouth, Cumbria, **Yo Bogie** from Thetford, Norfolk and **Geoff Hinks** from Mold, Clwyd.

Ten other runners-up, who just get the T-shirt, are **Bobby Sharma** from Southall, **Duncan Thorne** from Exeter, **Adrian Benson** from Bournemouth, **Matthew Innes** from Darlington, Co Durham, **Dean Nicholas** from Surbiton, **Timothy Curtis** from Petersfield, Hants, **Arthur Dance** from Stockport, **Paul Jennings** from Carnforth, Lancs, **Mr S Balshaw** from East Ardsley, Wakefield and **Ian Noon** from Burton-on-Trent, Staffs.

IT'S A DOODLE

A hudred quid's worth of art equipment was on offer in this one in the March issue, and it was snapped up by **Terry Noble** from Southampton. Let's just hope he can draw, eh?

The runners-up, who each get a copy of *Pictionary*, are **T Smyth** from Whinmoor, Leeds, **Paul Marchant** from Guildford, Surrey, **John Wilson** from Saltcoats, Ayrshire, **Pam Walker** from Milton Keynes, Bucks and **Lee Smith** from Ely, Cardiff.

DOUBLE DRAGON II

R Ingham from Maida Vale in London will shortly have muscles of fearsomely frightening dimensions, since he's the winner of the Avenger II Butterfly bench from way back in last year's December issue.

Fifteen runners-up will each get a copy of *Double Dragon II*, and they're **Nick Flavell** from Cambridge, **Edward O'Rourke** from Ballintemple, Cork in Ireland, **Martin Unsworth** from St Helens, Merseyside, **Dean Amos** from Braintree, Essex, **Matthew Gower** from Clapham Park, London, **Richard A Athey** from Sheffield, **Philip Brown** from Stroud, Glos, **John Atkinson** from Oldham, Lancs, **Stewart Wright** from Holywood, Co Down, **Ben Morton** from Shenfield, Essex, **Paul Spencer** from Kings Lynn, Norfolk, **Ian House** from Bolton, Lancs, **Stephen Mayo** from Wantage, Oxon, **S Trefla** from Derby and **Adrian Wall** from Stourbridge.

Twenty more runners-up will receive a *Double Dragon II* poster. Is there no end to this generosity? They are **Julian Warg** from West Bridgeford, Nottingham, **Michael Allen** from Brighton, Sussex, **JL Hewitt** from Beverley, N Humberside, **Alan Worrall** from Belfast, N Ireland, **David Hails** from Henley-on-Thames, Oxon, **James Wilkins** from Brentwood, Essex, **Bryan Granger** from Jordanhill, Glasgow, **Derek Campbell** from the Isle of Lewis, Scotland, **Richard Corner** from Stubbington, Hants, **David Emmerson** from Stockton-on-Tees, Cleveland, **Daniel Chapman** from Oakham, Leics, **Jonathan Dean** from Slough, Berkshire, **Parminder Sekhon** from Heston, Middx, **Richard Tomalin** from Romford, Essex, **Edward Anyaeji** from London, **Christopher Ralph** from Tipton, W Midlands, **Owen Fell** from Thornhill Park, Nuneaton, **K Dolman** from Eccles, Manchester, **S Walker** from Kentish Town, London and (puff, gasp) **LA Knight** from Swindon, Wilts.

GAME OF TWO HALVES

If you name's **Ben Boon** and you live in Kingswood, Glos, rejoice, for you have won a table football set and a copy of *Gazza's Super Soccer*, as featured in February's compo. A slightly more modest Tomy electronic football set goes to **Gareth Hill** from Ayelsbury, Bucks. What a lucky fellow. But the fun continues. Three people, **Colin Hall** from Leeds, **Lorna Hall** (no relation, presumably) from Mauchline, Ayrshire and **James Forsyth** from Drumchapel, Glasgow, will each get a Club Edition Subbuteo set.

And there are even some runners-up! The following people will each receive a copy of *Gazza's Super Soccer* – **Scott Chambers** from Kirkby in Ashfield, Notts, **Mark Farrell** from Stretford, Manchester, **Kevin Miller** from Hertford, Herts, **Shamshad Mirza** from East Salford, **Robert Pearse** from Bush Hill Park, Enfield, **David Smith** from Dartford, Kent, **Dave Thomas** from Hornchurch, Essex, **Bill Thompson** from Walker, Newcastle-on-Tyne and **JCM Watson** from Plympton, Plymouth.

MOONWALKER

An impressive Yamaha electronic keyboard was the star prize in this compo way, way back in the December issue last year, and it goes to **Daniel Lane** from Carlisle in Cumbria.

There were also 20 *Moonwalker* goodie bags to be disposed of, and these'll go to **Dean Amos** from Braintree, Essex, **Robert Ballington** from Hampstead, London, **Joseph Barrasso** from Peterborough, Cambs, **Jonathan Buckley** from Melton Mowbray, Leics, **R Canning** from Breat Barr, Birmingham, **Lee Coleman** from Brentford, Middx, **Ellis Cooke** from Cumnor, Oxforn, **Lee Culliver** from W Worthing, Sussex, **Karl Duncan** from Langworth, Lincoln, **Stuart C Duxbury** from Hinckly, Leics, **Mark Fieldsend** from Thame, Oxon, **Kevin M Gentry** from Thundersley, Essex, **Philip Glennie** from Laurencekiak, Kincardineshire, **James Hogg** from Chryston, Glasgow, **Robert Jones** from Hayes, Middx, **Aden Kelly** from Bridlington, E Yorks, **Aaron Moore** from Southampton, Hants, **Chris Reid** from Nairn in Scotland, **Mark Spore** from Fleetwood, Lancs, and **Ben Wackers** from Frontrose, Ross Shire.

THE UNTOUCHABLES

One lucky reader will shortly have his house defaced by a whopping great satellite. His name is **Robert Wilkins**, he's from Carmarthen in Dyfed (do they have satellite telly in Wales?) and he's the winner of a compo in the November issue.

Thirty runners-up won't go away empty-handed either. In fact, they'll be clutching copies of *The Untouchables*, and their names are **DE Boulton** from Denton, Manchester, **Daniel Brice** from Kingswood, Bristol, **Marlon Brown** from Tottenham, London, **Nicholas Carr** from Kirkcaldy, Fife, **D Cole** from Felixstowe, **Corin Ennis** from Bury, Lancs, **Duncan Fletcher** from Great Bookham, Surrey, **Jon Gourlay** from Finstown, Orkney, **Nick Humphries** from Saffron Waldon, Essex, **Sloan Kelly** from Girvan, Ayrshire, **Bruce Kendrick** from Coleford, Glos, **Wayne Killen** from Bedford, Beds, **D Kren** from London SE22, **Michael Leahy** from Carrigtwohill, Co Cork, Ireland, **Lee Matthews** from Southampton, Hants, **Darren Meredith** from Rhyl, Clwyd, **Stephen Minney** from New Duston, Northampton, **Paul Murphy** from Barnhill, Dundee, **Michael Poynter** from Belper, Derbyshire, **Ian Rampton** from Salisbury, Wilts, **Jon Simcoe** from Kettering, Northants, **Lee Smith** from Ely, Cardiff, **Richard Stuart** from Leicester, **Stuart Tipper** from Kidderminster, Worcs, **Thomas Vanner** from Lisburn, Co Antrim, **Andrew Wain** from Stoke-on-Trent, Staffs, **Christopher Watson** from Needham Market, Suffolk, **S Wheeler** from Harlow, Essex, **Richard White** from Doncaster, S Yorks and **Trevor Wright** from Melton Mowbray, Leics.

CHRISTMAS MEGACOMPO (OH NO!)

There are loads and loads of winners for this one (sorting them out was murder!) so let's race through them all as quickly as possible, eh? Ready, steady...

Ten copies of *Turbo Outrun* go to **Simon Ibbertson** from Sheffield, **John Davison** from Malton, N Yorks, **Kevin Peters** from Hitchin, Herts, **William Harvey** from Bramcote, Nottingham, **Ross McMillan** from Dalry, Ayrshire, **Mark Wilson** from Rotherham, S Yorks, **Chris Middleton** from Sidcup, Kent, **David Frears** from Rowrah, Frizington, **Alex Shaw** from Redditch and **Anthony Kirk** from Kensington, Liverpool.

More Compo Winners p64

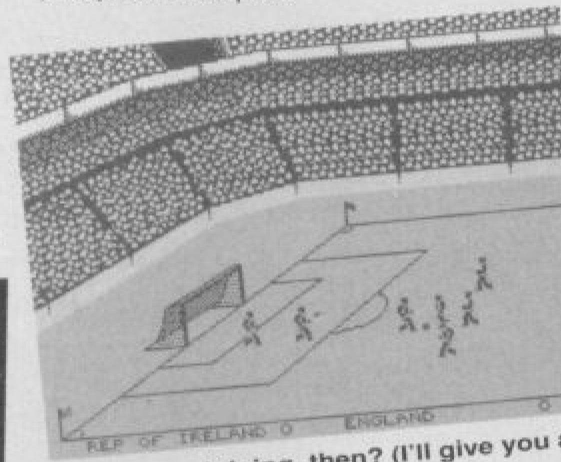
RICH PELLEY dons his washing-up gloves and snorkel and prepares to take on those oh-so-murky depths of...

BARGAIN BASEMENT

WORLD CUP CHALLENGE

Players/£2.99

Are you ready for some footy, readers? Players are. But I kinda think they won't be 'scoring' very highly with this one (haw haw) because although what's here is all very nice, thank you very much, it doesn't seem to be quite 'there' (if you catch my 'drift'). You load the thing up, choose your team and its players, give them positions, change a few game values here and there (which is all very nattily done with pretty piccies etc) and just as you've prepared yourself for a nice bit of joystick waggling – there isn't any. Not a sausage. Instead you have to sit your way through the 'highlights' of each half of the match in hand (snooze), changing game players and wotnot at half time, and again at the end of each match. It doesn't class as a decent management game either (not enough to do), which is a pity because it's all been nicely presented, follows the World Cup (remember that, viewers?) and avoids all those long, pifflingly boring lists and snoozeworthy key presses which usually drag these sorts of thing down. For the loyal footy nut perhaps worth a look, but for everyone else it'll be heading bin-wards pretty darn sharpish.



So how am I doing, then? (I'll give you a clue – I'm losing.)

QUATTRO SPORTS

CodeMasters/£2.99

Q What do you get if you cross a BMX simulator, a Grand Prix simulator, a ski simulator and a snooker simulator?

A An alarm-clock radio. Ha ha. Oh... Wrong punchline. No, you get four sports simulators neatly scrunched into one. (Ahem.) First to scrogg it is *BMX Simulator* – the game which put the word 'simulator' into, erm, simulators. Dash around billions of different bumpy tracks on BMXs (avec an overhead view) against the computer or a buddy with lots of nice things such as replays and tunes and so on. It's 'top notch'. Then there's *Grand Prix Simulator* – a complete *Supersprint* rip-off, yes (ie racing around Grand Prix circuits), but squillions better. Much the same as its friend *BMX Sim* come to think of it, except this time there are no spooky ramps or bumps, hence it's not quite such a laff. But still pretty good.

Verging more towards the skiing side of things there's, erm, *Pro Ski Simulator*. It's your usual ski-down-a-slope-at-27-billion-miles-an-hour jobby. Playable but boring. And finally we come on to *Pro Snooker Simulator*, which, to be honest, is a bit crap really due to the severe lack of colours (pink sort of flashes at you and green – well, don't ask about green) and a complete lack of realism – there are balls flying all over the shop. And there, my luvvlies, you go. One brill game, one good game, one not-quite-so-good-but-not-that-bad-either game, and one crap one. What do you reckon, gang? Same here. A complete barg.



BMX Sim – the game which launched a thousand simulators (well, quite a few anyway).

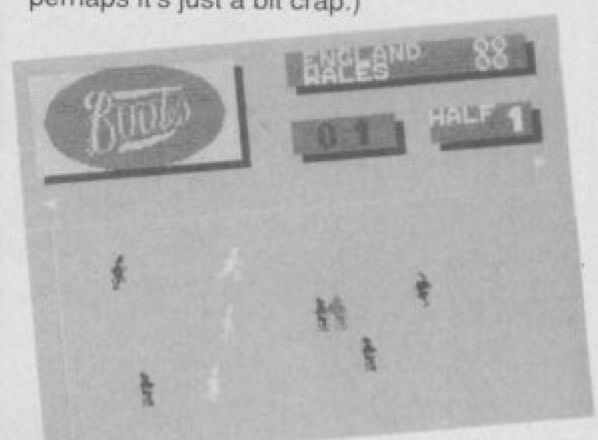
RUGBY

Blue Ribbond/£1.99

Picture the scene. The crowd is buzzing as your men line up for the start. The referee blows his whistle and the game begins. Will you achieve glorious victory in this vital match and win the Triple Crown (or even the Grand Slam)? Likely story.

Original, addictive, playable and interesting is what this game would like to be, but "a bit crap really" is all that it can honestly say for itself. It's a sideways-flipping thing – you control one player at a time and can pass, kick or punt the ball trying to score as many 'tries' (ie 'goals' in rugby terms) as poss (in a sort of sideways *Matchday* lookalike). You then 'convert' them by kicking the ball over this post thing, a straightforward waggle-the-joystick-press-Fire-and-hope-for-the-best affair.

It's all a bit muddled really. The graphics are quite small, badly animated and everything tends to get merged into one – so it's all gets a trifle difficult to tell exactly what's going on. And it's a bit hard too. The 'other' side manages to get away with seemingly impossible moves (eg kicking the ball for miles), which you don't have a hope of pulling off yourself. Things are better if you're playing with a partner – but only slightly because luck has far more to do with who wins than any 'skill' might have, so it hasn't really got any lasting appeal. And you're always getting these naff plugs for WH Smiths and Boots and things popping up all over the place as well. Spooky or what? (Or perhaps it's just a bit crap.)



So how am I doing, then? (I'll give you a clue – I'm losing.)

QUATTRO ADVENTURE

CodeMasters/£2.99

Roughly translated, language-fans, 'Quattro' means 'four' in Latin, or Spanish (or something), which is pretty cunning because guess what you'll find in *Quattro Adventure*? Four arcade adventure games for the same piffling price as one, that's what. A barg and a half to be sure.

Let's investigate. Take *Dizzy* (a walk-about/jump-over-obstacles/pick-up-objects/solve-lots-of-puzzles affair) – it's, ahem, "absolutely brilliant". (Such a fine game, in fact, that you lucky people should have found it lovingly sellotaped to the cover of issue 52 and played it hundreds of times already, so you'll know what I mean.) And then there's the flip-screen *Super Robin Hood* which sees you dashing about, jumping around, avoiding large quantities of baddies, shooting things and rescuing your girlie, Maid Marian (if you can find the time). Putting on the years a bit, yes, but loads playable, varied, fun and a complete spanker all the same. (One of me fave budgies ever, in fact, spook-fans.) Okay, so the other two aren't quite such scorchers – *Vampire* (platforms, ladders and cute small

FRUIT MACHINE SIMULATOR II

CodeMasters/£2.99

What's this then? Oh, a fruit machine simulator. Hmm. "Insert Coin". Which key was that again? Oh yes. In goes 20p. Press Space to start and dunk dunk dunk, did I win? Erm, no. I think I'll have another go. Dunk dunk dunk. Three bananas. Hurrah! I've won, I've won – but how much? Oh, 20p. I know, I'll gamble. Right, what do I have to do now – stop those flashing things and, ahem, I've lost. (Blimey, this game is crap.)

Or perhaps it's just me, 'cos I have to admit that as a fruity machine jobby you can't really fault this. It's got everything – and more besides (super nudge boxes, anyone?). It's a cinch to play (once you've mastered the keys), does so very realistically, erm, 'looks very nice' and, dare I say, is quite a lot of fun as well.

And things really start to hot up if you're playing with a friend or two. You all start off with an agreed amount of cash and the winner is the last player to go broke. (Simple really.) It sounds brill, but unfortunately I haven't got any pals so I couldn't actually try this out. And my family weren't much help either. (Sniff.) But never mind – *Fruit Machine Simulator II* is an ace laugh, there's oodles of features, and it's as addictive as a, erm, very addictive fruit machine.

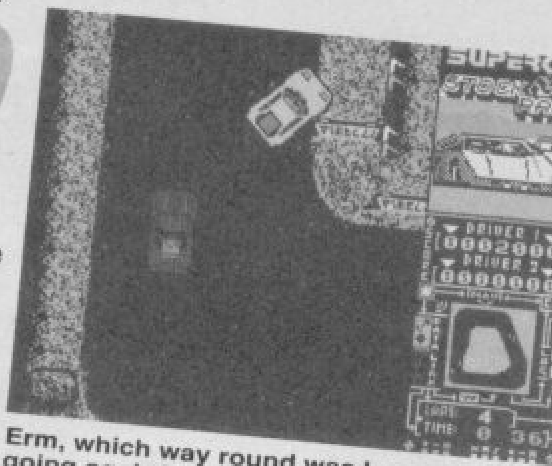


I want money. That's what I want. (So why I'm playing this game I haven't the foggiest!)

SUPER STOCK CAR

Mastertronic Plus/£2.99

Stock car racing's a bit of a spooky thing really, isn't it, sports-fans? Lots of people driving around a dirty-old racetrack getting all hot and flustered and crashing their fine automobiles into walls, fences and (heaven forbid) other people. Strange. Every fancied a go yourself? I have, but for some reason my dad won't let me borrow his car. (And I ask nicely too.) Oh well, looks like it's time to bring out *Super Stock Car* and try our



Erm, which way round was I meant to be going again?

grubby little hands at these activities in the 'comfort' of our own home.

The idea is to complete five circuits of a track (within a time limit) and get onto the next one. It's more of a race than a smash-up – you can ram other cars and they'll spin around for a bit (but inflicting no permanent damage). The screen scrolls to keep up with you as you go, so you don't get to see all of the track at once as in, say, *Supersprint* (yes, that again). This has the welcome effect of making the thing all that harder – especially when you get onto new unseen tracks. The controls are a bit mad – you sort of rotate around instead of turning (most confusing), and the graphics are a bit chunky, but colourful all the same. Overall, it's still playable and good fun, especially as there's the added 'bonus' of a built-in course editor thingy to design your own fiendishly fiendish tracks with. Hours of fun.



And here's, erm, a piccy of *Vampire*. Nice, eh? (And the game's not too bad either.)

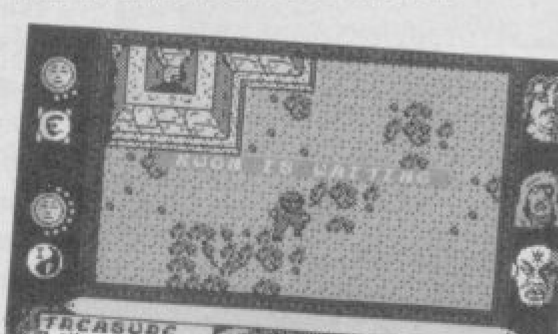
characters) is a bit boring (a significant lack of things to do) and *Ghost Hunters* (your average arcade adventure) is a bit, erm, average really. But there're still certainly worth a play or two, and at a mere 74.75p per game we're talking a bargain factor here of at least 97 billion.

AVENGER

Kixx/£2.99

Blimey – this one's ages old and a bit older still. But (shock horror) it is in fact a complete and utter corker of a spanker.

Your task? To simply find the keys to gain access to Quench Heart Keep, locate the wicked Yaemon, pinch the scrolls of Ketsuin, appease the God Kwon and



Blimey! Kwon is waiting, eh? Oo-blinkin'-er.

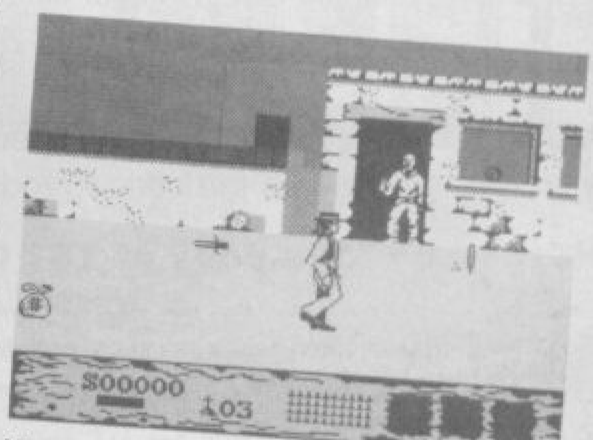
release him from the eternity of hell in a lake of boiling lava. That's all. Oh yeah, your father comes into it somewhere as well, but I couldn't quite work out where. Ahem. Of course, you can't just phone this Yaemon chappy up and ask him nicely to pop the scrolls in the post – instead you have to dash around madly a la *Gauntlet*, finding keys and bashing up baddies until you find the scrolls and dash out again. Phew.

Perhaps the best bit about the game is its variety. It's a scrolly one-player *Dandy*-style maze game (but with one big map rather than lots of individual levels), a sort of beat-'em-up (you have to beat up the baddies) and, well, a bit of a puzzler as well. Oh, and playable too. And addictive. And all with a more-than-generous helping of clear and fast graphics. My advice? Scrape together your spare coppers and take a visit to your local cheapy software emporium today!

SPAGHETTI WESTERN SIMULATOR

Zeppelin Games/£2.99

And I quote. "The mere mention of your name makes even the most hardened desperados shake in their boots". Golly! No, not *your* name, silly, because let's face facts, it's highly unlikely that any tobacco-chewin' critter out in the old Wild West will have actually heard of you. Oh, unless you



Nice flares, shame about the game.

live there of course. Nope, the name which makes even the most hardened desperados shake in their boots drone drone etc is...'Clint Westbound'. (Yes, I know – rather makes a mockery of the whole proceedings, doesn't it?)

Anyway, our Clint, the chump, has volunteered to single-handedly take-out all the bad guys who've been making the Wild West a little less 'wild' than it should be (which basically means a perfectly nice and respectable place to live really). And how, pray, is he supposed to do this? By trundling along a horizontally-jerking screen (with rather shoddy graphics) on the look-out for baddies cunningly hiding behind doors and windows, and then shooting them (it's a case of 'can you shoot them before they shoot you?' here, readers). Objects will also find themselves hurtling toward your head (avoid), and along the ground towards your feet (pick them up for extra ammo, to blow things up etc).

And, erm, well, that's it really. A bit of a duffer, I'm afraid, because although it's playable to begin with, it gets extremely boring rather too quickly. Snooze.

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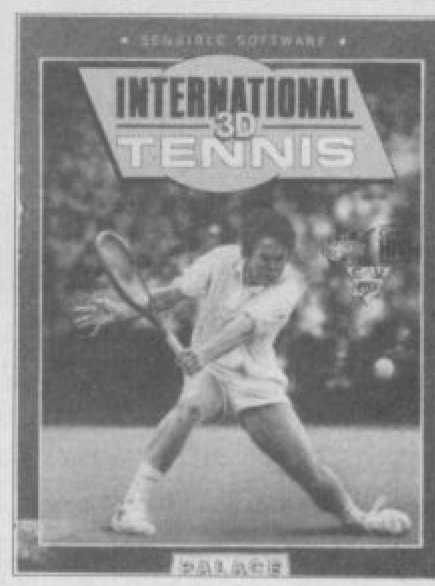
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THE TIME MACHINE

Vivid Image/£9.99 cass



Rich Looks like it's going to take me absolutely ages to explain what *The Time Machine* is all about (seeing as it's so stonkingly complicated), so I'm afraid there just won't be any room for one of my usual witty introductions. Quel shame, eh, readers?

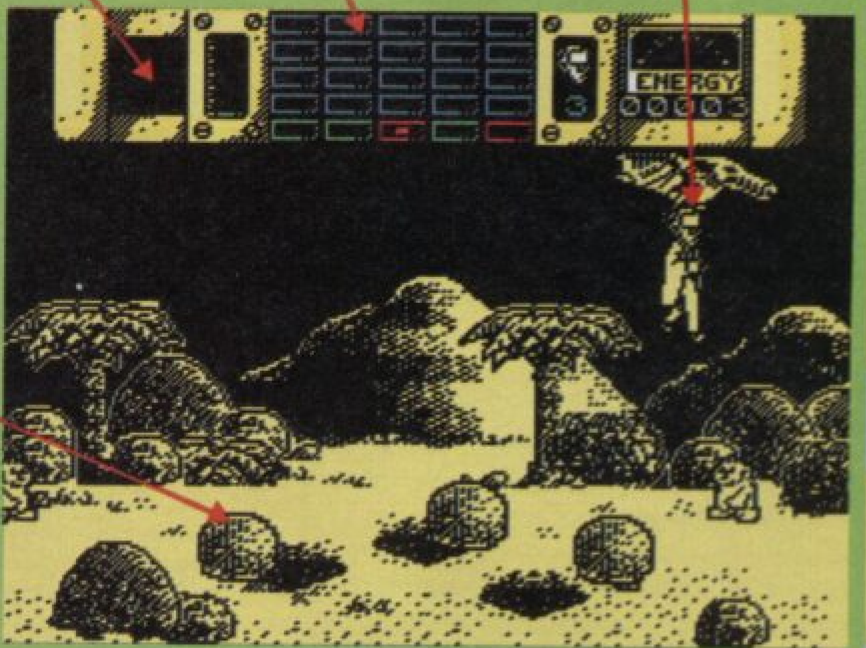
Come to think of it, I couldn't really think of one anyway, but let's not waste any more time wibbling on aimlessly – I'll get straight into explaining mode instead. Right, the whole shebang's a bit of a *Back To The Future* affair really, with you (stepping into the shoes of one Professor Potts) stuck in the past (after accidentally falling into some spooky sort of time warp thingy) and attempting to get (ahem) back to the future. Unfortunately, you've left your time machine at home (it's been blown up actually, in the explosion that created the time warp) so you have to effectively 'create' time so that everything that should happen does happen and the present, as you knew it, will eventually exist. You'll then be able to get back and stop the terrorists from bombing your time machine in the first place. (Or something like that anyway.)

YOUR SINCLAIR MEGAGAME

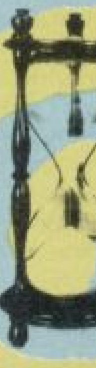
This box 'ere highlights things which are within your reach and you can pick up, but, seeing as nothing is within reach there's, erm, nothing in the box.

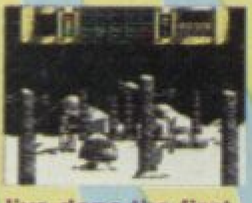
Each rectangle represents a screen, and each line of five represents a time zone. When one of those rectangle thingles goes red it means that there's trouble on the screen so you'd better whip over there sharpish to put things right.

Oops, not much room in this corner but perhaps just enough to mention that Pterodactyl jobby and, oh yes, that little furry creature and yikes! Out of space...



I won't tell you how to complete the first level, but if you stick those large boulders over the geysers then it'll cause everything to cool down and you'll complete the level.

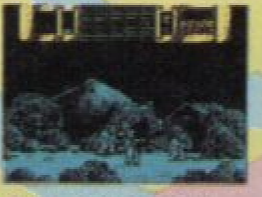




I've done the first level so now I'm on the second. Hurrah!

Okay, so there are five time zones (the Prehistoric Age, the Ice Age, the Stone Age, the Iron Age and the Present, ie now) to work your way through, with you starting in the Prehistoric zone and then having to create all the others as you go along. Understand? No, didn't think so. Look, I'll explain again. You start in the Prehistoric age, right? Your job is to somehow help this time zone to become the Ice Age, otherwise the present day will never exist. But how? Well, an Ice Age needs to be cold, dunnit (hence all that ice and snow and stuff)? So if you can somehow work out how to cool down the Prehistoric Age then you've got yourself the Ice Age. You'll then have two zones (ie the Prehistoric Age and the Ice Age), which you can jump between at will. Work out how to warm up the Ice Age and, lo and behold, you'll get a third zone – the Stone Age, to be exact. And so it goes on (and on).

However (and this is where it may start to get confusing) you have to keep popping back to check on all the zones you've already created, otherwise you might find yourself back at the beginning again. How so? Well, for instance, if the cooled Prehistoric zone starts warming up, then the Ice Age will never come about, and all subsequent zones will cease to exist. And what a pickle you'd be in then, eh? You'd have to start all over again. (Except it won't be as bad because you can just do whatever it was you did to create the Ice Age in the first place again to bring everything back. Phew.)



And now I'm on the next one (ie Level Three).



And blow me down, if it's not Level Four!

Right then. Perhaps I should mention what the game looks like. Well, it's a sort of arcade adventure thing with a five flip-screens-long playing area. The same five locations appear in each time zone, though they do look a bit different each time of course (due to the passage of time etc). A grid thing at the top of the screen shows which zones you've created, and a red rectangle indicates if there's something unsafe or changing on that particular screen to give you a bit of 'help'. To complete each zone you have to manipulate evolution so that everything happens the way it should. I won't tell you exactly what you have to do, but it basically involves walking around the screens picking up objects and using them where appropriate. Need some wood, for instance? Then why not plant an apple in the Stone Age – it'll have grown into a tree by later on in the game.

Throughout the levels there are other characters who you can interact with. For example, in the Ice Age there's this big yeti bloke who'll keep on hitting you (thus draining your energy). But then again, who can blame the poor chap – you're trying to destroy his home! Perhaps a prezzy would make him a bit happier (and keep him out of your hair?). There are also these little furry little teddy-bear mammals who you've got to look after to ensure that they don't become extinct – otherwise humans will never evolve from them and you'll be right in 'it'.

Right, I've almost finished (phew). Better just quickly mention your four re-usable travel pods which you can drop wherever you want, and then teleport to – v useful. Oh, and I might even mention your gun (which you can stun things with) if there's room. And, erm, blimey. This is getting worryingly confusing. I hope you can understand what I've been dribbling on about (unlikely), but in case you haven't I'll sum it up in a couple of words. Erm, it's good. In fact, it might even be very good, and it's certainly like nothing else you've seen before. It could quite easily have been a massive flop, but I don't think it will be because it's been so well thought out. In fact, I think it can have a Megagame if it behaves itself.



Would you believe it!? I'm on the last level! (All right, so I cheated. You gorra problem?)

finalverdict

80 60 40 20

LIFE EXPECTANCY	GRAPHICS	ADDICTIVENESS	INSTANT APPEAL
68°	89°	93°	80°

DIAGNOSIS

A completely different yet completely brilliant number. Hurrah!

91°

NIGHT



Ocean/£10.99 cass
disk to be announced



Matt It's deep-breath time here, I'm afraid. (Ah-haaaah!) Right, that's better. You see, I've just realised what an awful lot of explaining I've got to do – *Nightbreed* being one of those 'multimedia experience' thingies, you see, with a film, a comic, a book and all sorts to get through before we can even mention Ocean's computer games effort. In fact, I think I'll have to take another deep breath. (Ah-haaaaah!) Right, here we go...

Okay, to start off with you may remember us going on about the *Nightbreed* computer game quite a few times now (going back as far as a year or so ago). The whole kit and caboodle was originally meant to come out shortly after last Christmas, but the film's been put back and put back so many times now (with all sorts of new bits being added to it, old bits taken away and so on) that we'd more or less given up hope of ever seeing it at all. (Programmers Painting By Numbers apparently more or less finished the Speccy version six months ago, and have been sitting on it ever since.)

And then – suddenly – the film was on for release again! It should be out in September sometime (ie in a couple of weeks from when you're probably reading this) and of course all the merchandising is geared up to follow suit. Let's just hope the delays haven't been because the movie is hopelessly crap, eh, Spec-chums (as has rather unkindly been suggested around this office), because Ocean have actually done a rather spiffing little job of the conversion.

So who exactly are the Nightbreed then?

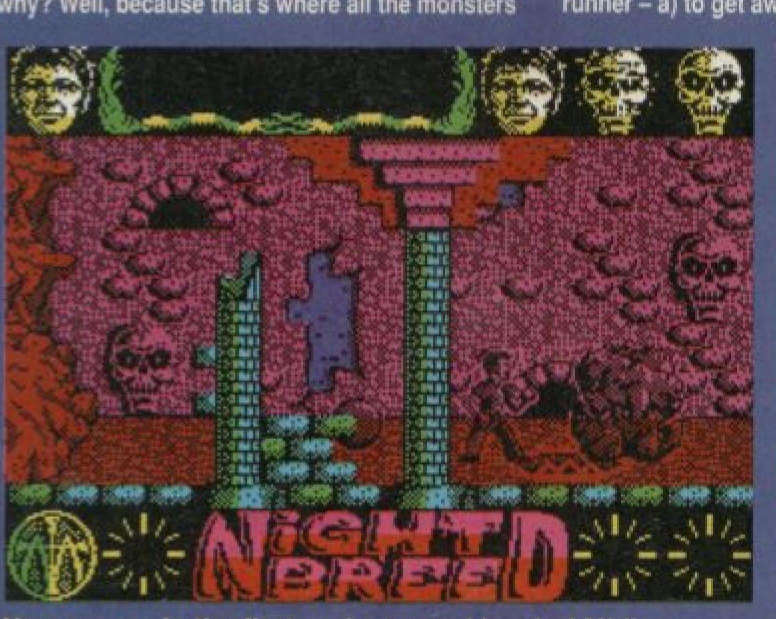
Basically, the idea goes something like this. There's this big underground city (Midian) stuck out in the Canadian wilderness somewhere, which is kept totally secret from the outside world. And why? Well, because that's where all the monsters live, of course – the twist being that most monsters (who call themselves 'Nightbreed' – hence the name of the game etc etc) are actually quite shy and peace-loving and would like nothing better than to be left alone, unhounded by humans. Of course, as you probably guessed, that is not to be.

Nightbreed tells the story of what happens when a rather disturbed young man called Boone (the chap you play in the game) searches out Midian (for reasons I'll explain in a minute) and in doing so unwittingly leads a bunch of redneck neo-Nazi types to its door. Of course, at this point all hell breaks loose, with 'The Sons Of The Free' (the rednecks) breaking out a secret stock of military weaponry (flamethrowers, rocket launchers etc) and doing their best to destroy the Nightbreed, while Boone attempts to rescue them all. Yep, the whole thing's a big, giant fight in other words, with Boone rather awkwardly caught in the middle (throughout most of the game, both humans and Nightbreed are out to kill him).

This being the case, what sort of computer game do you think they came up with to best illustrate it all? That's right, it's a beat-'em-up, though it's not a straight beat-'em-up a la *Shadow Warriors*, but more of a slightly cerebral, walking-around-a-bit, mapping-the-mazes-of-rooms, picking-up-the-odd-weapon sort of thing. (In fact, the gameplay reminds me more of *Last Ninja* than anything else.) All in all, it makes a welcome change from those film conversions where you have to plough your way through loads of multiloading sub-games which have precious little to do with each other.

A few paragraphs ago I said I'd explain what Boone's doing in Midian in the first place. Well, he's a bit of a confused young chap, you see, who's got some sort of dodgy past and happens to suffer from a series of blackouts (or something) when he can't remember where he's been or what he's done. This being the case, his psychiatrist has been trying to convince him (and just about everyone else) that he is actually (without knowing it) The Mask, a mass-murderer who's been running around terrorising the neighbourhood – and Boone has fallen for it! That's why he's done a runner – a) to get away from his girlfriend (in case he chops her up in his sleep or something) and b) to find the mysterious Midian he keeps hearing about, because that's where monsters go, and being a human sort of a 'monster' that's where he belongs (or something). Of course, you and I know he's not the killer at all – it's really Doctor Decker, Boone's creepy psychiatrist, who's trying to set him up!

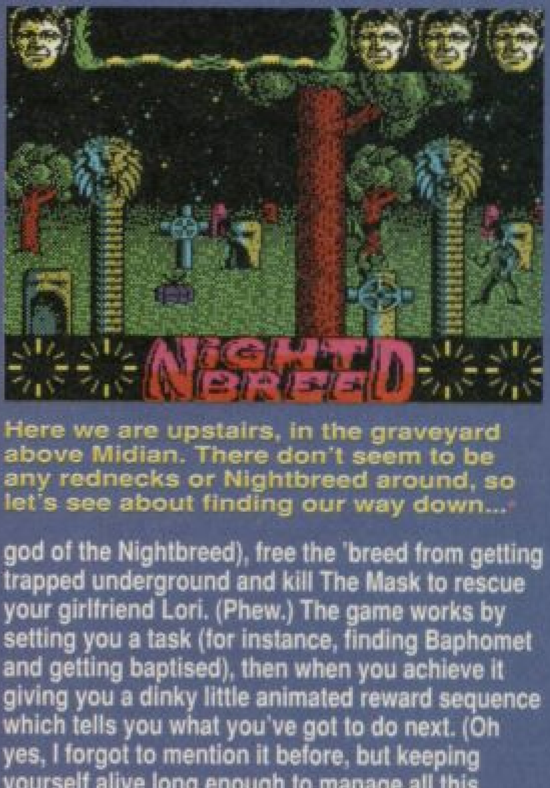
Phew. But enough of this plot stuff. Let's talk about the game itself, shall we?



Here we are in the first underground level of Midian, confronted by an, um, erm, a...well, it's some kind of Nightbreed anyway. (I think.)

At last – the game!

You, as Boone, have a handful of tasks to complete. First, you've got to collect the three keys to Midian, one located on each level, which will involve defeating or avoiding lots of Sons Of The Free and an equal number of hostile Nightbreed. You've also got to free the Beserkers, a bunch of homicidal and totally uncontrollable 'breed normally kept locked up in the dungeons of Midian (since they're as likely to go for you as anyone else I'm not quite sure about the 'why's' of this one), then get baptised by Baphomet (the living god of the Nightbreed), free the 'breed from getting trapped underground and kill The Mask to rescue your girlfriend Lori. (Phew.) The game works by setting you a task (for instance, finding Baphomet and getting baptised), then when you achieve it giving you a dinky little animated reward sequence which tells you what you've got to do next. (Oh yes, I forgot to mention it before, but keeping yourself alive long enough to manage all this wouldn't be such a bad idea either.)



Here we are upstairs, in the graveyard above Midian. There don't seem to be any rednecks or Nightbreed around, so let's see about finding our way down...

It's quite an uphill task trying to depict the rollercoaster, plot-twisting effect of a film like this in a computer game, but they've done pretty well actually. The play area – a fairly colourful flip-screen affair with big sprites and some nice touches (like lightning flashes *Myth*-style on the surface screens), initially takes place in the graveyard that lies above Midian. It's, say, five or six screens wide, but three or four deep as well – you move into the nearer or further row of screens by walking backwards or forwards through the various arches you find littered around the place.

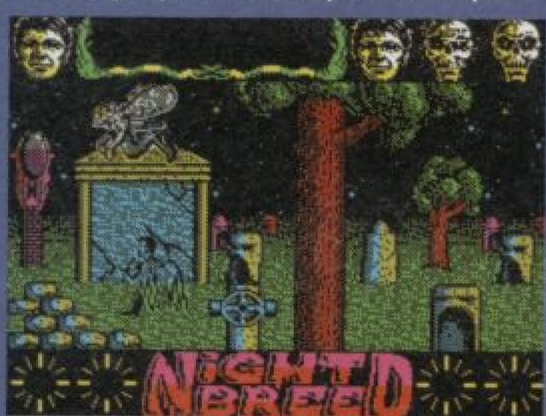
Wander round these enough (fighting or

BREED



avoiding men and Nightbreed as you go) and you'll eventually come across one of the ways down into Midian, which is laid out in the same sort of way. Drop further down again, and you'll come into lower levels of Midian yet.

I'm not going to describe any more of the plot

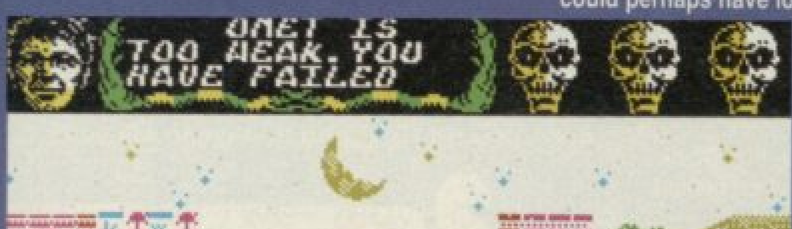


Hmm, we seem to have suffered a few hostile encounters already (check out those skulls at the top of the screen).

(working out what you've got to achieve and how you're going to do it is part of the fun of the game) but I will tell you what it's like to play. Um, it's good. Once you've sussed out the controls, and worked out using the Passkeys (inscribed tokens which let you into various areas of the game), you'll find Boone has a goodly number of moves he can use (kicks, punches, jumps, use of a gun should he find one etc) and the baddies, especially the weirder 'breed, are of suitably bizarre design, if occasionally a bit big and static. Visuals are all nice and large, and there are some neat little touches to them too (I like the Boone heads at the top of the screen which slowly get more skull-like as you lose energy, and the way he can temporarily change into a sort of vampire-thingie later in the game). This is a game that looks like a lot of time and effort has gone into it.

Negative points? Well, it is fairly hard (but then many people would class that as a good point, I guess) and the multiload can be murder in cassette format, but that's about it really. Midian could perhaps have looked a bit spookier, and the weirdo monsters aren't shown off to full effect in semi-monochrome Speccyvision, but that's just carping really.

It's actually rather clever, and this slightly puzzley beat-'em-up-type format seems to me a far more satisfactory way to convert a suitable film than one of these grab-a-few-action-sequences-and-build-quick-sub-games-round-them efforts. Mr Barker's inventive (if rather icky) imagination comes through very well too. All in all, I'd say *Nightbreed* is a bit of a success really. Hurrah! (Wonder what the film will be like though?)



Spook! What's happened here, eh? (Actually, it's lightning from the *Myth*-style storm, and we've caught it mid-flash!)

CLIVE BARKER – COMPLETE FRUIT LOOP OR WHAT?

Clive Barker is this spooky Liverpudlian horror writer who's managed to become rather famous rather quickly. Apparently he's quite good too – or at least he is according to the Amstrad Action *team who live across the way in the* YS *reception area. They're experts on the subject. Let's go over and have a chat with them, shall we?*

(A few minutes later.) Blimey! That didn't make much sense. Okay, here's a rough outline of what I've learned.

The Books Of Blood *Loads and loads of short stories – some dead scarey, some a bit crap, and all a bit horrible. One was about these demons who live at the end of the tube train lines and kill lots of people. Another was about these two villages in Yugoslavia where all the people tie themselves together into the shape of two giant wicker men, have a big fight and, um, kill lots of people.*

Hellraiser *(and its sequel,* Hellbound*)*
These were Clive's first proper films (he scriptwrited one involving some monster jumping out of a field a couple of years before but nobody's seen it). They're all about this mysterious Rubik's Cube which when twisted in a 'special way' opens up a door to another dimension. Then all these blokes with pins coming out of their faces come out and, erm, kill people.

Weaveworld *Another novel, this one's apparently all about a carpet (or something). Oh, and lots of people getting killed too.*

Nightbreed *(and its book version,* Cabal*)*
Lots of killing, etc etc.

WHO'S WHO IN *NIGHTBREED*

Boone This is you. Everyone says you're secretly a mass murderer (and being quite a trusting sort of a chap, you believe them) so off you run to Midian (a place where monsters go to have their sins forgiven), unwittingly leading a redneck Nazi lynch mob there too. Oops! (It all ends up in a massive fight.)

The Nightbreed The last remainders of an ancient race, they come in all sorts of bizarre shapes, sizes (and levels of dangerousness). Though lots of the Nightbreed are violent, most are generally passive and want nothing more than to be left alone. (They'd be lucky...)

The Sons Of The Free A bunch of very unpleasant red-neck types, heavily armed with flame throwers, rocket launchers, machine guns and so on who are out to kill the Nightbreed.

The Mask The lunatic alter-ego of Doctor Decker, Boone's psychologist and secret mass-murderer. He deserves a good kicking basically.

finalverdict

80 60 40 20

86°

LIFE EXPECTANCY	GRAPHICS	ADDICTIVENESS
82°	85°	89°

DIAGNOSIS
A rather large, rather clever and rather spooky film conversion. Bravo!

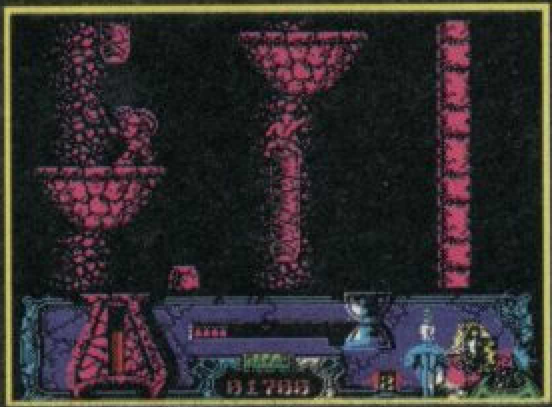
INSTANT APPEAL
84°



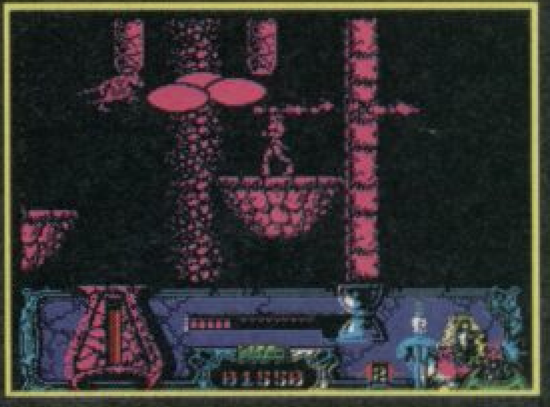
Dinamic/£9.95 cass/£14.95 disk



Jonathan Judging by all the skulls, axes and blood all over the box and, of course, the name, I thought we were going to be in for a crappy heavy metal game or something. But I was wrong (and not for the first time this morning). The game's all about beating up Satan, not shouting about him. So that's Interesting Fact No. One. Interesting Fact No. Two is that *Satan* is the latest from Dinamic, those cheerful Spanish programming people. *(That's enough interesting facts. Ed)*



How much like *Black Tiger*? Answer: very blooming like it actually. (Honestly, have these Spanish people no shame?)



Yikes! It's a spooky flying dragon thing! Get out of here! Go on, shoo!



Oops! I seem to have mistimed my jump slightly and found myself hanging from a rock. (What a revolting development).

From what I can make out (the instructions are a bit 'Spanish') the plot goes something like this – you're a warrior, and you've got to become a wizard in order to duff up the forces of evil. To do this you've got to collect three thingies, and then you'll have the necessary power to take on Satan, who has probably taken over the world or something.

Being a Dinamic game, this means two separate loading parts with a code to get into the second bit. It also means that I looked forward to playing it about as much as a punch in the face, as I've never really 'got on' with these Spanish games. They've all tended to be a bit messy and off-puttingly hard. So what did I think of this one? Well, you'll have to wait a bit longer because there's a bit more description coming up.

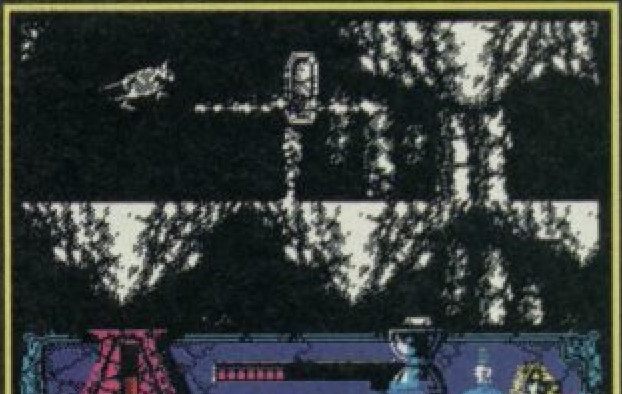
These two levels, then. The first one features you as a muscley warrior-type who leaps about from platform to platform and climbs up things with the help of a bit of four-way scrolling. He can also shoot baddies, which is quite handy as there are plenty of them, and collect the little icons they leave behind. These give all the usual extra energy, weapons and stuff. It all looks strangely familiar. Being a bit thick, though, someone had to explain to me that *Black Tiger* is most likely the inspiration behind this bit.

On to Part Two, and our warrior has become a wizard. He can still do much the same sorts of things, although in a more 'outdoor' environment. This time, however, he has to face the alarming prospect of a confrontation with Satan himself. From what I can work out this usually results in a Game Over message in no time at all, but maybe that's just me being crap again. Oh, and there's a 'shop' bit on this level too, also nicked out of *Black Tiger*.

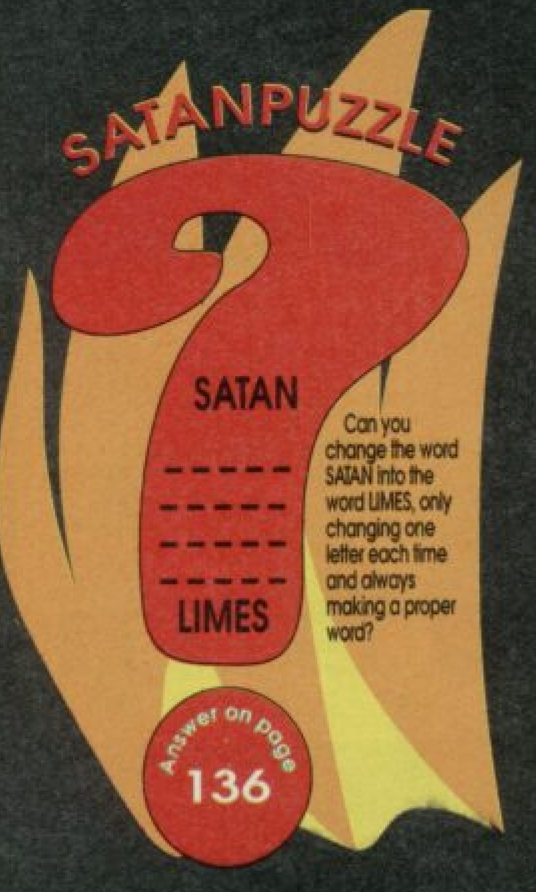
Right, criticism time. It's not too bad, actually. The first level's the best, nice and easy, while the second verges a bit on the hard side, and the way your character leaps about is most impressive. The graphics are quite good too. Okay, so they're not exactly slick (being in monochrome) and it does get quite difficult to work out what's going on at times, but apart from all that they're fine.

The only really snag is that *Satan* isn't exactly huge – I'd seen most of it after playing for only half and hour. Beating the game might be another matter, but, hard as it is, once you've managed that you might feel ever-so-slightly short-changed.

However Dinamic fans should enjoy it (it's probably their best yet, or one of their best anyway) and others should find it fun while it lasts.



I dunno, some creatures, eh? Look, if you don't sod off I'm going to have to kill you.





finalverdict

LIFE EXPECTANCY	GRAPHICS	ADDICTIVENESS
69°	71°	78°

DIAGNOSIS

Quite a good leaping game. A bit naff in places though.

INSTANT APPEAL 77°

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YS ADVE



Bestest news of the month is a new adventure fanzine called *From Beyond*. And what a pleasant surprise it is. The editor is Tim Demp, co-author of golden oldies *Project X – The Micro Man* and *The 'O' Zone*. Tim wrote them with Jon Lemmon, so it's no surprise to see a lengthy interview with Jon, who now runs Compass Software, in this first issue.

FB is 54 pages long and bimonthly. Issue two will be out by September, and will continue the Jon Lemmon interview and keep up the policy of reviewing every adventure received – in issue one there's *Shadows Of The Past*, *Puzzled*, *The Bounty Hunter*, *The Menagerie* and *The Hobble Hunter*. There's also a crossword, problems and five pages on how to write your own adventures, the first in a planned series.

Print quality isn't quite up to *Probe* standards yet, and Tim certainly needs a good spelling checker, but, other than that, a lot of work has gone into *FB*. If he can keep up the enthusiasm then this is one fanzine we'll definitely have to add to our lists.

From Beyond costs £1.50, from Tim Kemp, 36 Globe Place, Norwich, Norfolk NR2 2SQ. Make cheques and POs payable to KJ Kemp.

A plea for help from a wrinkled old adventurer. No, I'm not referring to myself, you cheeky monkeys. I'm talking about **John Stephenson** of 45 Haven Drive, Acocks Green, Birmingham B27 7TW. John calls himself a wrinklie so I won't be able to offend him. Well, he might be but that's just too bad. He'll forgive me if I can come up with some help for him on a wrinkled old adventure, namely *Operation Colossus*. This was published about four and a half years ago on a tape magazine called *16/48 Computing*, but my files are clueless on the title, and I can't find a reference to it in any of my Kind Souls lists. Someone somewhere must have played it, and even if you've not solved it you may be able to help John with his problemettes, namely how to get into the moat, what to do with the rope and tree, and what to do in the workshop after lowering the truck and starting the engine.

I don't know if **Brian Scott** of Calne in Wiltshire is a wrinklie, but he's certainly in a right old pickle with Tartan Software's *Prince Of Tyndal*. First Brian says, "I cannot get rid of the demons." Easy, you need the sword. Next question. "I cannot get the sword out of the ice." Oh, I see. Well, that's easy too – you need the torch. "I am unable to get the torch." Hecky-le-pecky. Throw the vase at it... don't tell me... Ah, Brian doesn't mention the vase so maybe he's got it, but just to be on the safe side, and I think I'd better, you must dig at the sandbank. "And in *Harvesting Moon*..." Oh, we solved that in the July issue, so with a mere touch of the Return and Tab keys we come to...

The next paragraph. Star of this one is **W Thompson** of 76 Monkchester Road, Walker, Newcastle-upon-Tyne NE6 2TU. That's the address to write to if you want help on *The Pawn*, *Red Door*, *Velnor's Lair*, *Apache Gold* and *The Island*. So why isn't this reader in Kind Souls? Just to keep you on your toes, me old chipmunks, that's why.

Further help is on offer from **John Devlin**, of 60 Rufford Road, Belle Vue, Doncaster, Yorkshire DN4 5BL. John boasts, and quite rightly, that his *Bard's Tale* party is now beyond the 130th level, so if he can help anyone struggling in the lower reaches of the game just send your questions and stamped addressed envelope to him.

And if that weren't proof enough of John's Mensa-like intelligence he's also written his very own adventure, *The Curse Of The Werewolf*, and asks how he might go about selling it. What else could I suggest but that he immediately buys a copy of that useful little tome *Adventures On The Spectrum* (by Mike Gerrard) which contains a chapter telling you how to do it yourself. I've resisted plugging my book for months, so I think I deserve a quick one, so to speak.

Nicholas Sweeney of Middlesborough is the next letter on the pile, and, my word, he's just bought my book. What a coincidence. His verdict? "I enjoyed every page." What, even the blank ones? Nicholas has also got kind words to say for Zenobi Software – "I was amazed at the speedy service, and very pleased by the quality of the games... I'd recommend Zenobi to anyone." And I couldn't agree more. The reason I mention this is that Nicholas wrote to me a couple of years ago saying there was no future for the indie houses as he couldn't be bothered bunging a postal order into an envelope and he was sure most other people felt the same. (This is highly unfair of me... I just hope no one reminds me of what I might have said two years ago!)

Nicholas also praises the Guiding Light telephone helpline, and I'm always glad to hear from people who have made use of various services like this. Do tell me what you think. Nicholas was playing *Jekyll And Hyde* one Saturday evening, felt quite pleased with himself for finishing part two, but couldn't start part three. Why? He didn't realise that a certain word quoted at the end of the second part is the password for starting the

I reviewed Jack Lockerby's game *The Miser* in the July issue, and grumbled about the lack of documentation in this otherwise excellent adventure *(What, as good as Bill and Ted's? Ed)*, based loosely on Dicken's *A Christmas Carol*. I'm delighted to say that this has swiftly been put right by Zenobi Software, who now publish the game. There are two pages of notes on the adventure, covering background and commands to use, and what to do in case of loading problems. There's also a lengthy HELP command in the game itself, which is available at £2.49 from Zenobi at 26 Spotland Tops, Cutgate, Rochdale, Lancs OL12 7NX.

News of *another* brand-new adventure fanzine, but as they've not been brave enough to send me a sample copy I can't comment on the quality. *The Fantasy Zone* promises to have a heavy adventure content, will be available on tape and disk, and, according to editor Philip Bird, will be at least 100 pages long. What, on tape or disk? For details, contact 41 Windsor Walk, South Anston, Sheffield S31 7EL.

NTURES

by MIKE GERRARD





third pa t. A call to Guiding Light was the only way he could carry on his Saturday evening adventuring. "Well worth 50p for two minutes of grateful help," he says. So while he was on the line why didn't he ask them how to finish *Bulbo And The Lizard King*, instead of pestering me? He says he's done the bit of thinking at the end and got rid of Stratos, but how do you actually end the game? Is it something to do with the hole? It certainly is. You must have tried to EXAMINE HOLE, in which case all that's left to do is DNAH TRESNI.

Gareth Pitchford hasn't quite got that far, as he wants to know the previous

There's a change of address in the land of the tulips, as Serge Roifinga who runs the Dutch Adventure Helpline has put on his clogs, climbed on his bike, strapped his Speccy to his handlebars and moved to a new location, namely p/a Esdoornlaan 518, 9741 ME Groningen, Holland. Any Dutch adventure players are welcome to write to him there.

bit, how to defeat Stratos. Something to do with thinking, he thinks. He thinks right! Or rather he doesn't, as he's tried thinking of everything he can... er, think of, but Stratos keeps bringing out his skeletons and winning. (The blighter!) What you have to do is first ETAH KNIHT and then NOGARD KNIHT. Then see the previous paragraph!

Gareth's also struggling in *Apache Gold*. Where's the rope? ENOTSBMOT EHT TA ESOON EHT S'TI. What to do with the tomahawk? Two uses – SUTCAC DNA HCNARB. How to get the manure? NREF DEEF. And, being the generous gent he is, Gareth offers help to other readers on the games he has solved, which are *Escape*, *Forest At World's End*, *The Hobbit*, *Karyssia*, *Lord Of The Rings*, *Mountains Of Ket*, *The Pawn*, *Quest For The Golden Eggcup*, *Red Door*, *Warlord* and *Winter Wonderland*. Send your sae and questions to 45 Underwood Drive, Whitby, Ellesmere Port, South Wirral L65 9BH.

John Bond (I know his brother, Premium) wrote to me twice from Stubbington in Hants but forgot his sae, so here's his reply. Oh no, it's that wretched Bulbo again. I'll have to print a full solution to this one, I can see. John complains that the trolls keep sending him back to the start of the game after he's pinched the spade from them. Don't complain, as that's what's meant to happen! It saves you tramping all the way back yourself at this point, which is the next thing you need to do. In *Behind Closed Doors The Sequel*, forget about the grease on the drainpipe. In *The Hermitage*, John wonders where the money is for the man on the rope-bridge. First you have to save the body from the burning hut. I guess the reason you can't do this is that you've gone and thrown the water at the vampire, which is one of your tips for this game. Instead you should use the water to TEKNALB TEW. To get rid of the vampiress – XIFICURC WORHT. Thanks for allowing me that last little bit of backwards writing, John, and now I can stroll off into the sunset for another month. (Sings – *I'm walking backwards to Christmas, across the Irish Sea...*)

If you turn the page and cast your eyes onto Coupon Corner, you'll see that Zenobi Software have just converted *The Jade Stone* and *Agatha's Folly* into +3 disk versions in the nick of time for our Wright special offer. Stop press news is that the game will be going on general release at £3.99, but *YS* readers with a biro and a pair of scissors can have them at the reduced rate of £3.49. Coo!

Other interesting Zenobi rumours are that there will be a *Balrog's Box Of Delights*, boasting four brand-new adventures on one tape for about £3.99, and further +3 conversions of established favourites like *Crack City*, *The Case Of The Beheaded Smuggler* at the same price. Double–coo!

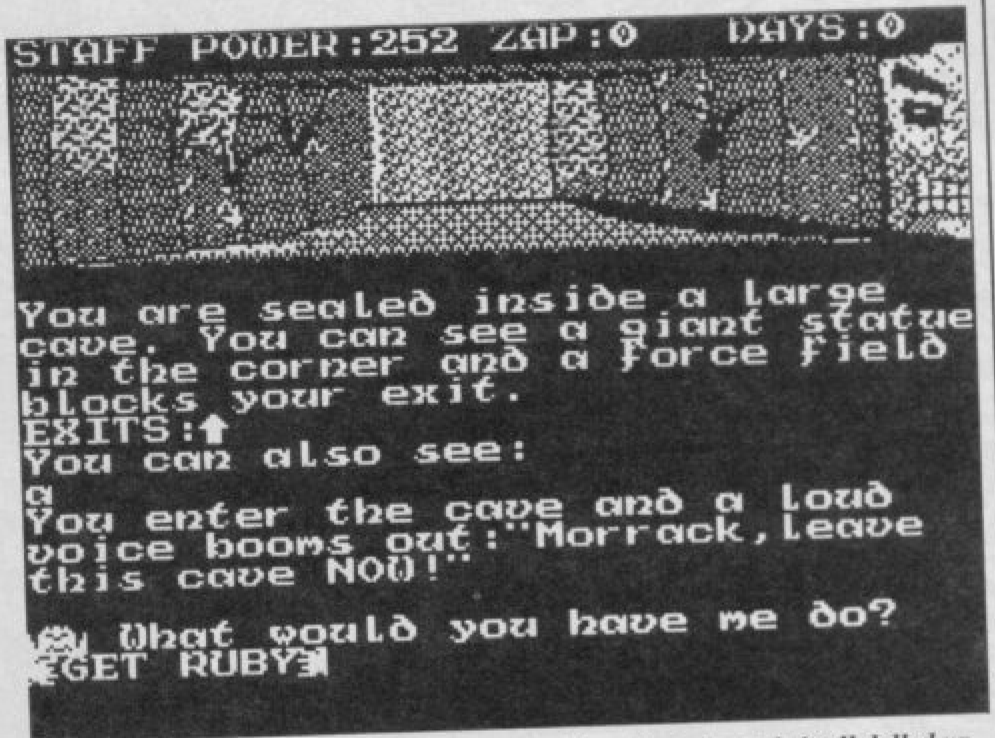
SHADOWS OF THE PAST

When a company's been around for a while, like Compass Software has, churning out reliable adventures from *Project X* through *Demon From The Darkside* to *Intruder Alert*, it's easy to take them for granted and forget just how damn good their games are. I was a bit disappointed with *The Hobble Hunter*, but that for me was a rare failure – and even that wasn't too bad! The company's right back on form now, however, with *Shadows Of The Past*, a game you're well advised to buy.

In fact, you can get it even if you've got the earlier game that inspired it, *Demon From The Darkside*, as this new one is a total rewrite of that golden oldie, managing to make it even more golden in the process. The packaging's excellent, with a colourful cassette inlay and several pages of notes, an example other indies would do well to follow.

You will need to read those notes too, as they contain some information you will definitely require if you're to get anywhere at all in the game. The story casts you as Morrack, the apprentice wizard, and your adversary is Drakon, the dread evil lord. You may have thought that you'd seen him off when you finished the *Demon* trilogy (which also included *The Golden Mask* and *The Devil's Hand*), but through a time rip in space he evaded death and you're right back where you started from, except this time Drakon is forewarned and ten times nastier than he was the first time. Lawks-a-mussy!

To give you a bit of a chance, you do have a magical staff (oh, all right then – oo-er), which can cast seven different spells, including LIFE (brings people back to life), LIGHT (guess what), FIRE, STORM and EARTHQUAKE. That is, you will have the staff if you make the first few moves correctly, as it ain't in your possession when you begin. Each spell drains the staff of some of its power, and at the top of the screen is a status line showing STAFF POWER, which starts at 251, DAYS (so much to do, so little time) and ZAP, which relates to certain spells that last for a while, like LIGHT, and enables you to check how long they've got left. Also, ZAP must equal 0 in order to use any of these countdown spells.



Mmm, GET RUBY... Yup, definitely a wise decision. (Let's hope she's all dolled up in some skimpy hog's-fur bathing cozzie, eh, Spec-chums! Ahem.)

Right, are you still with me after all these complications? Good, though in fact it's much easier to play than try to explain. When you begin you're standing in the wasteland of Vral, with dozens of dead orc bodies all around you. In their midst, torn and bloody and barely able to move, is a small dwarf. A shadowy cave is the only exit, to the south. (Good, innit?)

As you explore the first few locations, anyone who's played *Demon* will feel like they're meeting a long-lost friend... the ruby, the statue, the walls that close in on you. But don't think your knowledge of the previous game will always help you! And not only are some of the problems different, the game has been well enhanced by programmer Jon Lemmon's latest discoveries about just what you can do with *PAWS*, and in particular its ability to incorporate external commands. We've got used to sound effects in his games, and there are plenty of those here, but some new and nifty visual effects have been added too. There's a great little routine that shakes the screen when you utter the magic word in the cave and cause the statue and cave to shake and move about.

One thing I like about this and other Compass Games is that it's easy to progress, although you don't always know whether you've done everything right and are in fact progressing in the right direction. There are very few barriers that frustrate you because you just can't figure out how to get past. When you do come up against what seems like a dead end, you know you need to go back and check you've done everything you could I had to do just that when I thought I was making terrific progress, only to have to restart the game and find an extra object in the very first location, which I'd swiftly departed from as some orcs were being decidedly orc-ward. It's the sign of a good adventure that when that happens you don't say "Damn, I've got to go back", but mutter "Well, the crafty little... programmer" instead.

I don't want to give too much of the game away as it's full of little delights and surprises, and the effects are certainly best discovered for yourself. It's got the usual handy *PAWS* commands, like GET ALL, RAMSAVE, graphics on or off, multiple inputs and so on. The piccies were a touch disappointing, apart from the usual atmospheric loading screen, and there was the odd mistake like examining the arrow or owl only to be told "It's just a (sic) arrow/owl".

Normally I don't like it when people re-hash old ideas, it makes me suspect they can't come up with new ones, but just as we all got more enjoyment from Level 9's earlier games when they bunged them onto their new adventure system, this Compass title is also well worth another look. And three cheers for the price being kept at the £1.99 level, which makes it a terrific bargain. In fact, I'll go even further – four cheers!

Title.. *Shadow Of The Past*
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AND WHAT'S IT DOING IN YOUR SINCLAIR?

It's sitting here terribly quietly on the page feeling a bit lop-sided, actually.



YES, YES – BUT (BUT! BUT!!) WHY'S IT HERE?

Um...Not too clear on that one. Er...Because it's being produced by Future Publishing (hurrah!) who are these funny people in Bath who now own Your Sinclair. And if you'll just shut up with all these QUESTIONS in CAPITALS, I can tell you all about it.

Right. Well, it's for C64 owners, it's got bloomin' loads of games in it, and it's got a mega whopping fabbo tape on every issue. Sorry about that mega whopping fabbo, by the way.

What else? Er...Well if you know anyone with a 64, then tell 'em they should've bought a Speccy. No – let's try that again. Tell 'em that they should get Commodore Format because it's a completely wonderful magazine. Honest.

Commodore Format: It'll be quite good. Probably.

FIRST ISSUE ON SALE SEPT 13th ★ IF YOU'VE GOT A C64, GET A COPY!

A DEMON SOLUTION

Compass Software's *Demon From The Darkside* has been mighty popular over the years, and questions on it started rolling in again when I featured it in Coupon Corner some months back. It's high time we sorted the game out once and for all though, and so here to nail it for all eternity is an alphabetical solution, care of that excellent chappie, *Jim Magee* of Glasgow.

WARNING – *READING A YS SOLUTION, EVEN IF IT'S WRITTEN BY JIM MAGEE, CAN BE DAMAGING TO YOUR ADVENTURE HEALTH, SO ONLY READ ON IF YOU REALLY WANT TO KNOW THE ANSWERS...*

Arrow 1 In body 1 – PULL ARROW and both it and the body will vanish. This frees Ashmeard to help you.
Arrow 2 In dark cave. Leave it – no use found.
Blade Saw blade. Leave it – no use found.
Body 1 See *Arrow 1*.
Body 2 In gloomy room – EXAMINE BODY and coin appears, as do shadows. Wise is essential to defeat the shadows and let you survive and get the coin. See *Torch*.
Boiling Water At the marsh – USE CREAM to protect your legs so that you can reach Wise again.
Bone THROW BONE to get rid of Cerberus for a short time.
Bridge To cross the crevasse, CALL SID and the rats make a bridge. It collapses very quickly, however, so don't waste time.
Cave 1 At the start. Once in, you can't get out.
Cave 2 Sealed cave with guardian. He lets you past once you have solved the rats problem.
Cerberus Stops you entering the cave. See *Bone* and *Stalagmite*.
Charon Takes you across the Styx. BLOW HORN and GIVE COIN.
Coin Gold coin. See *Body 2* and *Charon*.
Cold Cream See *Boiling Water*.
Crevasse See *Bridge*.
Demon Shadow demon. Weakened by light from torch.
Demons At fire in bright cave. You must be wearing the mask or they kill you.
Door 1 Beyond the face. It only opens once Drakon is defeated.
Door 2 Oak door down the pit. Unlock door with the key.
Door 3 Oak door in castle. Close door and it stops the troll. Open door earlier to get through.
Dragon KILL DRAGON with sword.
Drakon The enemy. Appears at the watch tower. To defeat him, have Stodge and the staff.
Face IN, then north through the door to finish the game after Darkon is defeated. See also *Teleport*.



Falcon Staff EXAMINE LEAVES to see it, but the troll appears when you try to get it. Cast smoke spell, then GET STAFF and run. See *Door 3*. Stodge uses staff to defeat Drakon.
Fire In bright cave. LIGHT TORCH here to pass the demon.
Fire Spell CAST FIRE to LIGHT TORCH before entering gloomy room. See *Body 2*.
Gloves Wear gloves to be able to carry the ice stone.
Gold Coin See *Coin*.
Guardian See *Cave 2*. He sends you east to the cave with the rats.
Help Outside door 2, HELP summons Wise with the key.
Herne EXAMINE HERNE then GIVE HORN and he shows you a hole beside the fire.
Hole 1 EXAMINE STAIRS reveals woodworm. BREAK STAIRS then go IN and OUT.
Hole 2 See *Herne* – to reach rest of the game; can only carry limited items through hole; WEAR GLOVES, WEAR MASK and take the sword, Wise and the teleport spell.
Hook Get the rope and the hook, TIE ROPE to make a grappling hook which is needed to get you back from the top of the stairs to the circular room – THROW HOOK.
Horn Belongs to Herne, also summons Cahron.
Horseshoe No use found.
Ice stone THROW STONE to freeze the moat. Wise drops it after being cured with the talos root. You need the gloves to carry it.
Key See *Help* and *Door 2*.
Knife No use found.
Life Spell Cast life to revive Sid, who helps you later.
Marsh The boiling marshes are where to find Wise again. He flies off after you across the Styx. See also *Boiling water*.
Mask Examine slime to find it. Wear it to prevent trouble from the demons.
Moat Full of flames, the ice stone freezes it for a while.
Oak doors See *Door 1* and *Door 2*.
Pit Near the start, EXAMINE PUDDLE to find Sid. See *Plank* to get out.
Pond EXAMINE POND to see the talos root.
Puddle In the pit near the start. EXAMINE PUDDLE to find Sid.
Rat This is Sid, in the puddle. Revive him with the life spell, then CALL SID twice. He helps to stop rats attacking, and to make a bridge of rats across the crevasse. He dies when the bridge collapses. Sniff-sniff.
Rats In the cave, east of the Guardian. See *Rat*.
Raven Wise will save you from this, but is badly hurt in the process. See *Root*.
Root Talos root in the pond. Spirit stops you getting it. EXAMINE SPIRIT, which wants the sword, then leaves you the root in return.
Rope 1 In the hole under the stairs. THROW ROPE then CLIMB ROPE to get back up. You can't recover the rope once you are back up.
Rope 2 In the strong room. See *Hook*.
Ruby Examine the statue in the dark cave, then INSERT RUBY to be sent out of the cave into the tunnel.
Sacks In the dungeon – EXAMINE SACKS to find Stodge.
Saw blade No use found.
Sealed cave See *Cave 2*.
Shadow demon See *Demon*.
Shadows See *Cliff Richard*. Just joking – see *Body 2*.
Sid See *Rat*.
Slime See *Mask*.
Smoke spell CAST SMOKE to delay the troll and escape with the falcon staff.
Spirit See *Root*.
Staff See *Falcon staff*.
Stairs 1 See *Hole 1*.
Stairs 2 In large circular room. Top is low down. See *Hook*.
Stalagmite CLIMB STALAGMITE as soon as you've got the cold cream, as Cerberus returns soon.
Statue EXAMINE STATUE then READ SYMBOLS to find the word you need in order to move it (MELLA) and let you go east.
Stodge EXAMINE SACKS (in dungeon) to find Stodge, then DROP ALL, GET STODGE, GET ALL (for some reason).
Stone See *Ice stones*.
Styx See *Charon*, *Horn* and *Coin*.
Sword Needed for dragon. The spirit at the pond demands its return before you can get the talos root.
Symbols See *Statue*.
Talos root See *Root*. USE ROOT to heal Wise after he's dealt with the raven for you.
Teleport spell CAST TELEPORT after Drakon is defeated at watch tower to get back to face for the end.
Torch See *Fire* and *Demon*. It's blown out as soon as you pass the shadow demon. Don't go back. Then see *Fire spell* and *Body 2*. It's essential that the torch is lit here.
Troll Can delay it but can't fight it, so run. See *Smoke*, *Staff* and *Door 3*.
Useless spell Precisely.
Walls Close in on you. See *Plank*.
Wise Essential. GET WISE when you see him. See *Help* to find him at first. See also *Body 2*, *Marshes*, *Raven*, *Ice stone*, *Talos root* and *Key*.

COUPON CORNER

THE PRICE IS WRIGHT!

Yes, folks, come on down, 'cos the price is definitely right in the latest Coupon Corner, as soppy old Zenobi Software have agreed to do a super-dooper special on the various Linda Wright adventures they publish. There's something here for everyone – 48K machines, 128K machines... and a special surprise for +3 owners too. *The Wright Stuff* includes that golden oldie *The Jade Stone*, right through to Linda's latest (and possibly last, boo-hoo) Speccy gem of a game, *Agatha's Folly*.

If you've never tried one of Linda's adventures, now's your chance at cheap-cheapo prices, while the rest of you can fill in those gaps in your collection. And it's not just me that rates her games – plenty of readers have written in to say that *Agatha's Folly* is one of the best adventures they've ever played, while Linda's first few games were considered good enough to be published by Incentive Software. This made her so rich that she started her own software house, Marlin Games, and published her adventures on that label until Zenobi stepped in (sperlash!) and took over all that boring distribution work.

And there's more! The price cuts make this offer special enough, but to put the icing on the cake there's a first-time offer for disk users. Zenobi supremo John Wilson has just finished converting Linda's two most popular games, and they're now available on +3 disks at only £3.49. That's about £1.50 more than you'd pay for a blank disk. Caramba!

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And that's your lot! See you next month!

THE 1990 ATARI ST PRODUCT GUIDE

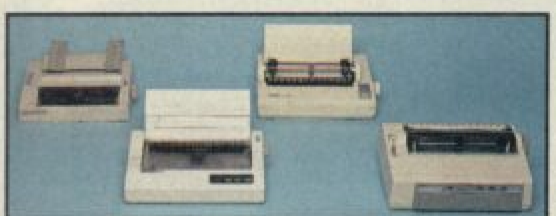
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TNT

Domark
£14.99 cass/£19.99 disk



Jonathan Most of these compilations tend to have some kind of a 'common theme'. So how about this one? Presumably Domark would have us believe that all five games are 'dynamite' or 'explosive' or something, but I have my doubts. Perhaps it's 'having an apostrophe at the end' (which would account for two of them) or 'being slightly crap' (ahem). No, in fact the connection is that all five are Tengen coin-op conversions. Exciting, huh? I don't think so.

Hard Drivin'

It is hard drivin' actually. What we've got here is a conversion of one of the most awesome arcade games ever (in the world). It's a solid 3D 'driving simulator' where you get to drive some sports car around one of two tracks extremely quickly.

So is it any good? Well... erm... David thought so back in the March issue, but I'm not so convinced. The graphics tend to disintegrate a bit (although this doesn't affect the gameplay too much) and it's blimming hard to control the car. And it does get a bit boring. All the same, *Hard Drivin'* is very 'sought-after', a huge technical achievement and a game well worth having.

'90 Rating: 81°



Yee-ha! The stunt track in *Hard Drivin'* is the one to go for, though even here there's not really all that much to do.

Toobin'

"Join Biff and Jet, the tube-dudes, as they cruise the baddest rivers in and out of this world... the coolest game on the streets today." Fat chance. More like a Codies *Advanced Inner Tube Simulator* if you ask me. You've got to paddle part of a tyre down a river and get to the end as quickly as possible. There are lots of obstacles to collect and/or avoid and baddies who fire at you from the banks and need to be clobbered with tins of spaghetti. Nope, this is pretty rough stuff – in fact, its only consolation is that it tends to get lost amongst the rest of the compilation. Next!

'90 Rating: 59°

APB

Right, this time round you're a cop (called Bob) who's got to cruise the streets in his patrol car picking up felons. You've got a certain quota to fulfil each day, and your chances are increased when you get an APB (which stands for 'Aroma of Peanut Butter', I think). This means that you've got the opportunity to hunt down an especially naughty crook who'll need to be interrogated by waggling your joystick from side to side.

Graphics? Nothing startling – monochrome, weedy but very scrolly. Sound? Annoying. Playability? Lots of it, once you've got the hang of what's going on. Worth having? As part of compilation, certainly, but it's one of the less desirable titles in the box.

'90 Rating: 70°

Dragon Spirit

This is probably the best game of the bunch. You're a dragon (spook!) who flaps his way across a vertically-scrolling landscape for no obvious reason. In the course of your travels you come up against an assortment of shooting thingies, so it's just as well that you can shoot back. There are land-based baddies, such as snakes, which need to be bombed, and flying ones, like the Formation Pterodactyl Team, which are best shot down. Oh, and let's not forget those lovely add-ons.

Apart from a few minor problems, like icons whizzing off the screen without giving you a chance to grab them and getting sent back to the start every time you die (nngh!), this is a very passable shooter.

'90 Rating: 83°

Xybots

And the last one. This is the oldest of the collection, dating from last year's August issue. And it's the third-best, I reckon. It's a maze game where you (and maybe a pal) have got to dash around and shoot robots. You're a robot too actually. The screen is split down the middle, and there's a communal map at the top. Visually it's not going to break any records, but *Xybots* is an enjoyable enough romp with plenty of violence.

'90 Rating: 78°

Okay, out with the calculator. (Clonk.) That's five games (prod, prod) at £14.99 (prod, prod, prod) which works out at (prod) £2.998 each, which is (prod, prod, prod) 8p more than an average cheapie. On the whole this lot are better than budget games though, so, mixing in the good with the bad, we've got an all-right deal. Worth a look.

finalverdict

80 / 60 / 40 / 20

LIFE EXPECTANCY	GRAPHICS	ADDICTIVENESS	INSTANT APPEAL
85°	79°	76°	98°

DIAGNOSIS

Nothing alarmingly good, but a solid, dependable compilation all the same.

84°

DEFENDERS OF

Enigma Variations
£11.99 cass/ £14.99 disk



Matt Hurrah! At last we've got the *YS* SAM up and running (it took cannibalised parts from two Coupé's to do it!) which means we've been able to take a (belated) look at Enigma's *Defenders Of The Earth*, the first, and so far only, arcade game to take full advantage of the machine's rather stunning graphical capabilities.

(To be honest this is hardly a 'first look' – we've had our copy of SAM *Defenders* lying around the office for ages waiting for a functioning Coupé – but it's worth a gander nonetheless. After all, most of us have never properly seen what the Coupé is really capable of as a games machine).

So what's it like? Well, looks-wise, as you'd expect, it's excellent. The graphics are considerably more subtle and less blocky than the best that the Amstrad CPC (the most colourful of the 8-bits) is capable of, though (hand on heart) it isn't really up to current 16-bit standards. It's not as far off as all that though (try imagining a budget ST game) and who knows what could be done (or should that read '*could have been* done'?) with the Coupé in time. It's also fast – a lot faster than other versions of the game I've played, which doesn't help matters for a devout Mr Crap like myself. All versions of *Defenders* were tricky, but this one is ludicrously hard, with many of the opponents almost impossible to dodge, and the speed with which the SAM whizzes everything around the screen is a major reason why. (If you want to know more about the actual gameplay – a rather simplistic shoot-'em-up based on a Saturday morning TV show – check out the Speccy version review in *YS* 54.)

And so, to sum up. There're just two points to



Pretty, isn't it? *(Yes. Reader's voice)* In fact, it's super-pretty. The loading time (on disk) is only a couple of seconds too – in just about every respect this is much more like a 16-bitter than a humble Spec. (Well, a budgie 16-bitter anyway.)

HOSTAGES

Infogrames
£9.99 cass/£14.99 disk



Rich Right, first off I ought to tell you that *Hostages* is French. So guess what? Yes, okay, so it comes from France, but what else? Well, bearing in mind everything we know about French games, don't you think it's fairly likely to be a bit, well, 'funny'? You know, packed with lunatic premises, bizarre futuristic sporting contests, badly-translated English and the odd naked woman? Mmm, you would, wouldn't you? Well, prepare yourselves for a surprise. 'Cos spookily unbelievable as it may seem *Hostages* is actually a reasonably straightforward arcade-cum-strategy thingie.

Here's the plot. "Innocent people have been swiped from under your nose, terrorists have abandoned their cars, entered an Embassy and taken over the building. You have to get six men into the building and rescue the hostages." Gulp! (Excuse me a mo while I just nip to the toilet for a second.)

Right, I'm back from the loo, all dressed up in my best anti-terrorist balaclava and ready to go. So now what? Well, first I've got to get three of my men into sniper positions around the building. But (oh no!) the terrorists seem to have worked out a 'cunning' plan to rumble me – they'll simply shoot anyone they see approaching on sight! A bit of a problem, you might think, but luckily nightfall comes to the rescue. All the terrorists can see now are the bits where their searchlights are shining. Duck, leap and roll your men one by one across the horizontally-scrolling screen, until they (hopefully) reach their pre-set starting positions, and we're ready to go.

Now for the next level, which is the assault on the embassy. All you've got to do is get in the building and kill all the terrorists (without injuring the hostages) – simple, eh? You've got two ways to go really. Either a) abseil some men down the side of the building with some gentle wibbling of the joystick, enter through a window, find the terrorists and shoot them, or b) have your sniper try and shoot them through the windows. Clear a floor of terrorists, and you can place the rescued hostages in a safe room before moving onto the next floor. Of course, you can flip between characters, using them in combinations to clear particularly tricky rooms, and it's often wise to use your snipers to take out anyone foolish enough to lurk too near a window.

In the graphics department things are good – very good in fact, especially the first level. The only problem is it's all a bit easy. Again, the first level (the positioning of the snipers) is the best, but without wanting to sound smug or anything, I can complete it without losing any men every time and then it's on to the second level which is a lot harder, and does (I'm afraid) get a bit boring after a while as well. An excellent conversion but – was it really worth it?



I always wondered how to abseil. And I'm still wondering.



Ah ha! I'll get you this time, you good-for-nothing terrorist. (Blam! But then again, perhaps not.)

finalverdict

80 / 60 / 40 / 20 — **73°**

LIFE EXPECTANCY	GRAPHICS	ADDICTIVENESS
58°	89°	75°

DIAGNOSIS
Nicely presented arcade strategy game, well put together but just not quite 'it'.

INSTANT APPEAL 87°

F

THE EARTH

SAM VERSION



A couple of water jumps from somewhere in the middle of the first level, and very tricky they are to get over too. In fact, those two words sum up the whole game really - um, 'very tricky'!

make really. For a start, well done, Enigma, for both supporting the Coupé and coming up with such a visually stunning demonstration of what it can achieve. I still think the actual game itself is a pretty average one really, but I'm going to bung the SAM version much higher marks than the Speccy one got simply because a) there's nothing to compare it with and b) you bothered getting off your butts and doing it. If you want a copy and can't find it in the shops, send a cheque for £11.99 cass/£14.99 disk to Enigma Variations, 12 Northpark Road, Harrogate HG1 5PD. (And look out for other SAM things from them – apparently a pack of SAM-specific puzzle games is available now too.)

The other point is a pretty obvious one, but I'm going to say it anyway. It's a real shame what's happened to the Coupé, but until I saw this game I hadn't quite realised how much of a shame. Let's just hope something can be salvaged, eh?

finalverdict

80 / 60 / 40 / 20 — **84°**

LIFE EXPECTANCY	GRAPHICS	ADDICTIVENESS
65°	91°	62°

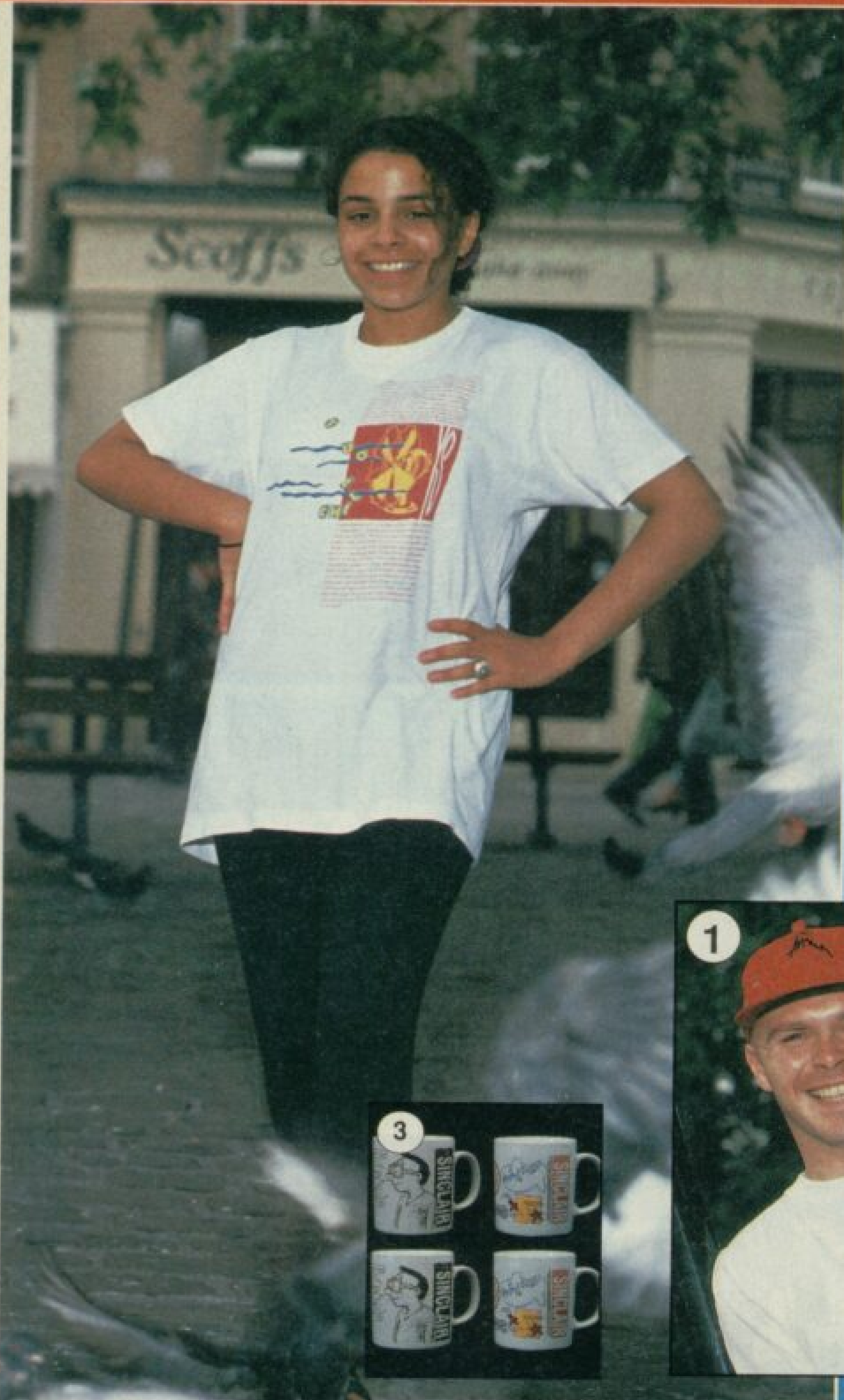
DIAGNOSIS
The first 'proper' SAM game and it's stunning. Perhaps lacking in long-term appeal though.

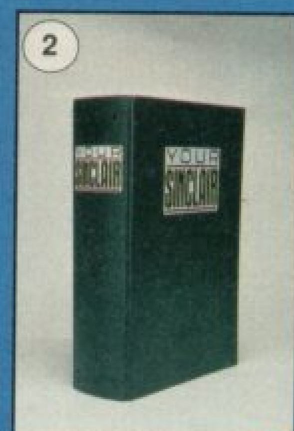
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1986

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Sounds like a plug to me...
And indeed it is. The Computer Shopper Show takes place on the 6th to the 9th of December at Alexandra Palace, London, and promises to be the biggest, fabbiest show of the year. It'll have about 280 exhibitors who'll be, er, exhibiting all sorts of really interesting computery things, some of them possibly Speccy-related. Last year, as you may remember, the show was so popular that thousands of computery-type people had to be turned away as there wasn't room to fit them in! But it shouldn't happen again this year, as things are generally a lot bigger. So it'll be really good then.

And I get free tickets, I suppose.
Well, maybe. First prize, however, is a heart-stopping five minutes with a shopping trolley dashing around 'selected' stands at the show cramming in as many goodies as you can manage (up to two per stand). Rather handy really. And three runners-up will each get a pair of much-sought-after tickets to the show. Completely free!

So what's in it for you?
Well, we'd like you to do a little something for us. Matt's always been a bit cagey about revealing his middle name, and, try as we might, we simply haven't been able to squeeze it out of him. Not even an initial. We've tried all sorts of different ways (depriving him of food and water, tickling him, you name it) but he's refused to give in! So we want you to try to guess it. It's no good trying to ring up the office to find it out though - we're obviously as clueless as you, and Matt certainly won't tell you. So it's guesses only, and the winner will be picked (in secret) by Matt out of everyone who gets it right. Fill in the coupon, then, and send it off to *Don't Ask Me, I'm Completely Off My Trolley* Compo, *Your Sinclair*, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW. And remember, entries must be in by October 31st, or you won't get a sausage.

And here are a few of the companies foolish enough to let you pilfer stuff off their stands...
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Rules

◆ *Prospective trolley-pushers from Future Publishing and Blenheim Database Exhibitions had better just, erm, push off.*
◆ *Entries must be in by 31st October, or you'll have nothing to 'show' for your efforts. (Geddit?)*
◆ *No arguments with Matt, or he'll give you a trolley with a wobbly wheel!*

I think Matt's middle name is...

....

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Oh no! Just when you thought it was safe to open *YS* again it's the return of those Teenage Mutant Ninja Hero Flesh-Eating Killer *YS* Readers' Games from far, far away in... (gulp)



SON OF CRAP GAME CORNER

Since we made the tragic mistake of running the original Crap Game Corner a couple of issues back, mail has been flooding in by the sackful.* So the good news is that (hurrah!) we've decided to do another one. But the bad news? Well, we all know who was responsible for that last paltry effort, don't we? Hmm. And hard as we tried we just couldn't get rid of him this time round either. Yep, you guessed it, it's that darn RICH PELLEY child again.

** Well, one economy size sack really.*

Hello, readers, and welcome to this, my second feeble attempt at Crap Game Corner. In case you were fortunate enough not to have seen the previous one then listen carefully and I'll explain what it's all about. Basically, it's the bit in mag where you, the beloved reader, writes a game, sends it in and then we have a good old slag at it because, sure as eggs is eggs, it'll be, erm, crap (hence the 'Crap Game' bit). Brill or what?

However, I think you should be warned that your measly offerings this issue aren't as bad as they were last time – they're worse. So depressingly bad, in fact, that the only (printable) word that I can possibly think of to describe them all is (yep, you guessed it) 'crap'. Crap, crap, crap. Crap crap crap. Crapity crapity cr... *(I think we get the idea. Ed)* Ahem.

AND THE SCORES AT THE END OF THAT ROUND...

Just to add that 'professional' touch, I've cunningly devised a stunningly brilliant scoring system (with a little help from everyone else in the office, that is) to use exclusively for this occasion. So, er, here it is...

Technical Ingenuity How well is everything 'done'? If it's full of nice graphics, kooky sound and natty routines then it'll get a high mark. If it's not then it, erm, won't.

Achievement This gives some idea of how well whatever was set out to be done in the first place has actually been carried out and done, if you see what I mean.

Fun How fun is the game to play? (Obvious, really.)

Crap Factor Okay, so it's crap. But by exactly how much? Three feet deep and rising? Or just enough spread to slap on your bread?

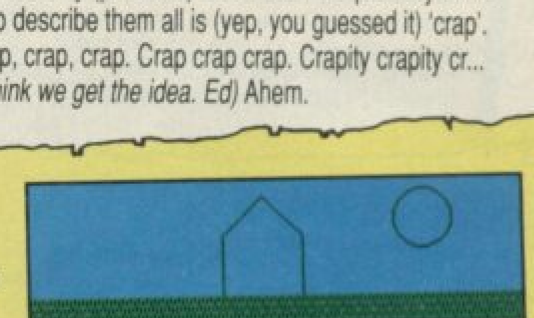
Overall Add up the four marks, divide the answer by four and what you get will bear no relation whatsoever to this overall mark (ho ho). Y'see, this bit gives a sort of idea of how well the game would sell if it was released 'properly' to the general public (ie you). So don't be surprised if you get a pifflingly low mark even if I did think your game was a jolly good 'wheeze'.

YET MORE *ADVANCED LAWNMOWER SIMULATORS* AND THINGS
By S Young and Steven Anderson

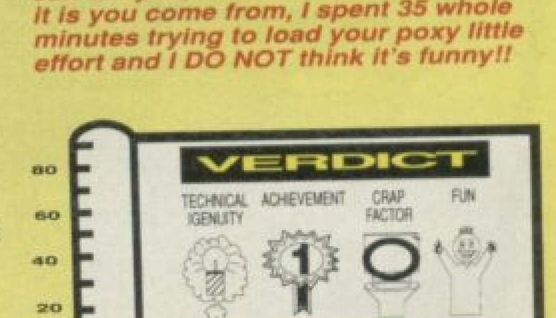
Either you people have got extremely serious reading disabilities or you just don't like me. (Oh, I see. Thanks.) 'Cos what did I say last time round? "No more advanced lawnmower sims, *please*", that's what I said. And so what do you do? Yep, you send in even more of the pesky things. I dunno – it'll be smacked botties next time, that's for sure.

Anyway, we all know what *ALS* is about, don't we? I really can't be bothered to explain. Just take it from me – it's hopeless. (The original was written by Dunc so there you go.) And since then we've had rip-offs and follow-ups coming out of our ears. But what subtle variations have we got this time though, Specchums? Well, firstly, there's *Advanced Broken Lawnmower Simulator* (by S Young) where your mower is, erm, broken, so you can't actually do any mowing with it. Pure genius, that one. Then there's *ALS II* (but don't get confused – it's not the same *ALS II* as 'featured' in the last CGC, but a spookily different one by Steven Anderson). This sports a special sub game which has you frantically banging your keyboard (*Daley Decath* style) to start your mower, with an extremely likely possibility of blowing yourself up in the process. Ecstatically good fun (I don't think). Other 'attractions' (if and) when you finally get round to putting mower to grass include such delights as skidding on a large pile of dog poop and being taken off in an alien spaceship. Crikey!

But after all this, I just don't believe it. These are even crapper than the last lot.



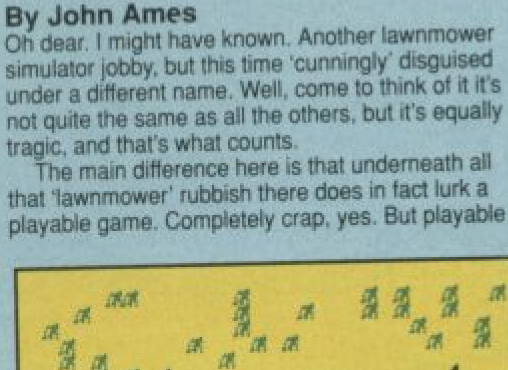
And he thinks this is funny. Well, I can tell you, Mr S Young of wherever it is you come from, I spent 35 whole minutes trying to load your poxy little effort and I DO NOT think it's funny!!



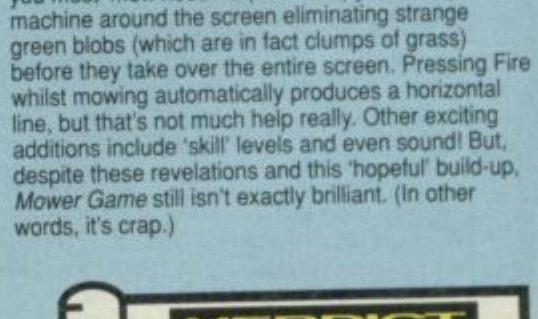
MOWER GAME
By John Ames

Oh dear. I might have known. Another lawnmower simulator jobby, but this time 'cunningly' disguised under a different name. Well, come to think of it it's not quite the same as all the others, but it's equally tragic, and that's what counts.

The main difference here is that underneath all that 'lawnmower' rubbish there does in fact lurk a playable game. Completely crap, yes. But playable nonetheless. One difference (breaking away from the traditional, um, tradition) is the introduction of more than one key (five this time, fact-fiends) with which you must 'mow'noeuvre (haw haw) your trusty machine around the screen eliminating strange green blobs (which are in fact clumps of grass) before they take over the entire screen. Pressing Fire whilst mowing automatically produces a horizontal line, but that's not much help really. Other exciting additions include 'skill' levels and even sound! But, despite these revelations and this 'hopeful' build-up, *Mower Game* still isn't exactly brilliant. (In other words, it's crap.)



We kid you not. This is supposed to be a garden. (He obviously lives on another planet, eh, readers? Ho ho.)

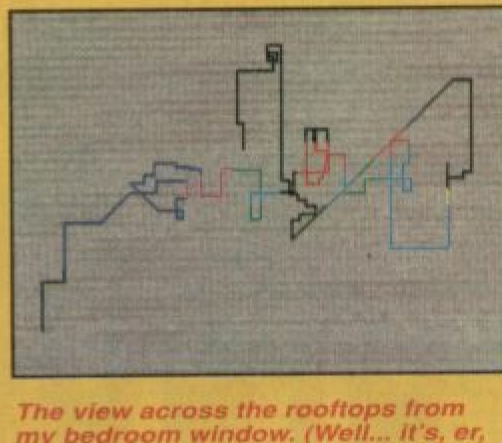




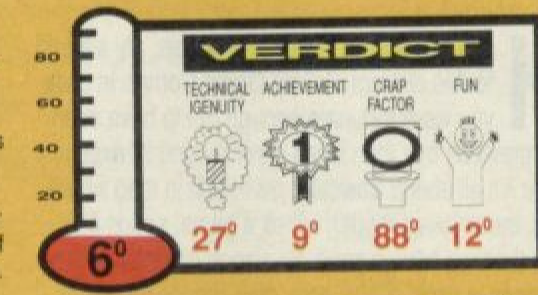
UNTITLED
By Jeremy Lee

I'm haven't the foggiest what this thinks it is. All that happens is that you, well, sort of draw a wibbly line on the screen. That's it. Perhaps it's meant to be some sort of cunning game. Nah, I don't think anyone could write a game this crap. Some kind of psychological jobby perhaps? Y'know, to freak you out or relax you or something? Well, maybe not. Hang on, I've got it! You're an art package, aren't you? *(Yes, I am. Crap game)* (Cripes.)

I mean, with these things it's a case of the more complicated the better, isn't it (so to speak)? And this one is so simplistic it's almost turns me on. Its huge supply of options offers such exciting features as allowing you to choose the border colour (spook), change the colour of your line (double spook) or even fill the entire screen with one colour (spook with an extra large dollop of spook), none of which is much use, and hardly worth staying up for. CRAAAAP! *(Thank you. Crap game)*



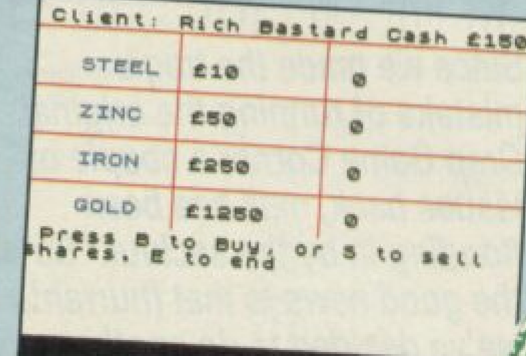
The view across the rooftops from my bedroom window. (Well... it's, er, impressionistic, innit?)



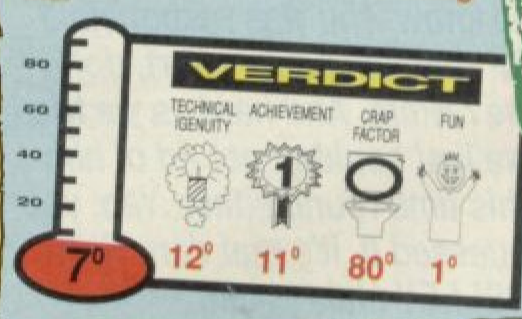
TRADING
Also by Jeremy Lee (unfortunately)

This game really is a 'barrel of laughs' – it's based on the 'exciting' happenings of the stock market, a jolly good prospect for a game if ever I saw one. You start off with 1,500 quid with which to 'invest' in shares in steel, zinc, iron and gold. Then the following year you can sell them or buy more, hopefully making even more cash. Nail-biting stuff for sure.

I know this is Crap Game Corner, but this really is pushing it a bit. It's so bad it's embarrassing. The whole caboodle's written in BASIC and it's generally about as imaginative and interesting as something which isn't. But then again it does win the most boring and dull game of the month award hands down, so there's one thing to its name I suppose.



I can't bear it. The tension's killing me.

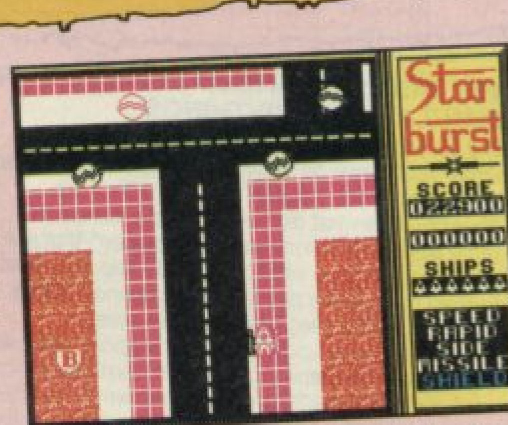


STARBURST
By James Gardner

Starburst? Sounds like one of those 'quasi-scientific' words we advised as a name in our brillo *YS Guide To Shoot-Em-Ups* a while back. Which is quite uncanny, really, 'cos *Starburst* is a shoot-'em-up, following the usual formula right the way through. No plot worth speaking of, no animation worth speaking of, no sound worth speaking of. Yup, simplicity is the name of the game, but with one redeeming feature – it's vaguely good. Too good to be in Crap Game Corner, almost (but not quite, or it wouldn't be here, would it?).

Even though at first glance it may look suspiciously like your average vertically-scrolling shoot-em-up (it is), as one progresses many a delight is uncovered. There's scrolling, full-colour backgrounds (with nary a hint of colour clash) and a pretty spanky add-on weapon system where you don't lose everything along with that life. And, best of all, it is, verily, playable. I almost played it twice.

Luckily, though, I've still managed to find a few niggles to complain about. The sound is chronic (although we are assured that it'll be improved), and there are too few levels (just as you get hooked you're out of the game) but, on the whole, it's not really too bad. Too good to earn a slagging-off, that's for sure. Damn.



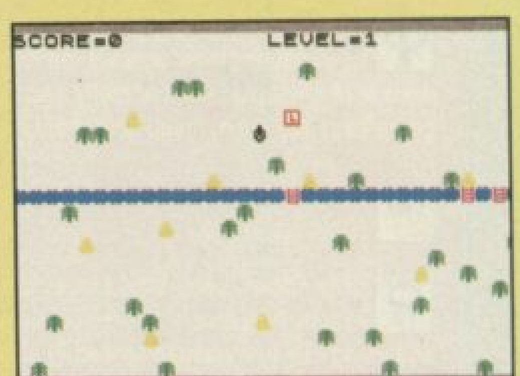
It's pretty, it's playable, and it's jolly annoying because I can't slag it off.



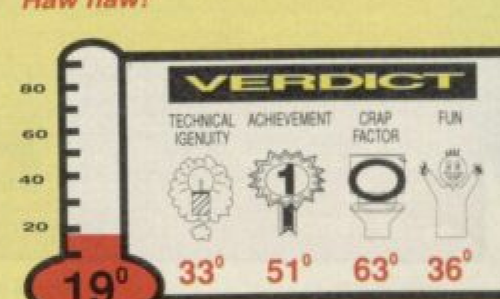
SKI CHALLENGE
By Phillip Walker (age 11)

Our chum Phil claims, amongst other things, that *Ski Challenge* is undoubtedly "the best skiing sim on the market", and (no questions asked) "the ultimate ski challenge". Oooooh dear. Where do these people come from? Well, suppose I'd better have a go (groan) – let's 'kick snow' (or something).

Right then, you're this little bloke and you have to ski down a slope without crashing into the randomly placed trees, or falling into the river (that blue line in the middle of the screen), picking up bags of gold as you go down. A bit like the second part of that ancient game, *Horace Goes Skiing* in fact, although a squillion times worse (if not two). And that's about it really. A full nappy's worth.



No, let's be serious about this. For a guy who's only 11 years old this isn't bad at all. Nope, it's terrible. Haw haw!

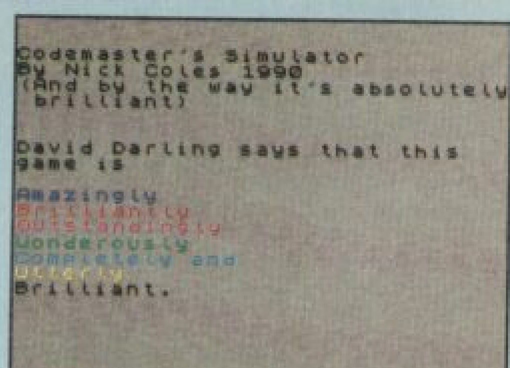


ADVANCED CODEMASTERS SIMULATOR
By Nick Coles

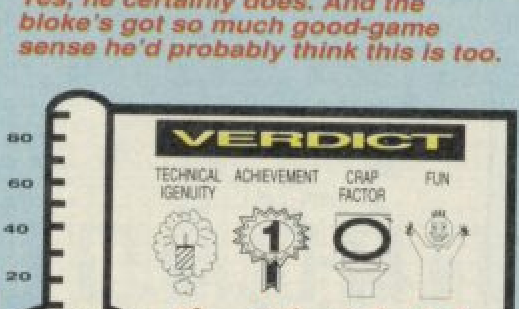
"Absolutely amazing! Brilliantly brilliant drone drone etc, " quotes the introductory blurb. And believe me – it certainly is. "Honest."

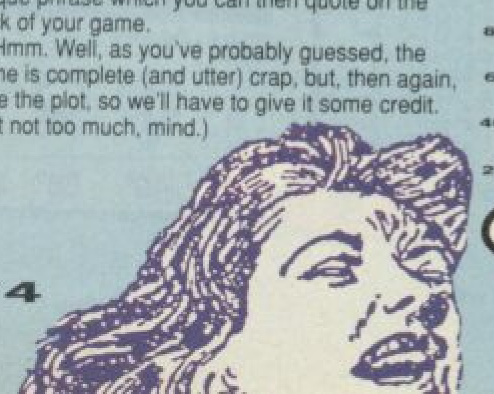
The plot goes something like this. You've taken the 'initiative' to break into the CodeMasters offices, kill those CodeMaster 'boys' and nick all their money. Hurrah! But a sudden disappearance in Codies releases would certainly seem a bit fishy, wouldn't it? So you have to keep churning them out before someone catches on. The only prob – no David Darling to come up with all those unique quotes to put on the back of the cassette inlays (because you've just popped his corks, dummy). And here's where the game begins. Lots of words flash up on the screen and you have to press a key to stop each one. Eventually you'll come up with a unique phrase which you can then quote on the back of your game.

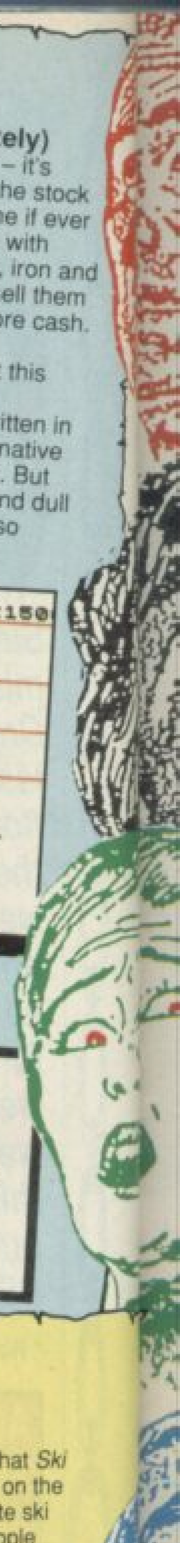
Hmm. Well, as you've probably guessed, the game is complete (and utter) crap, but, then again, I like the plot, so we'll have to give it some credit. (But not too much, mind.)



Yes, he certainly does. And the bloke's got so much good-game sense he'd probably think this is too.





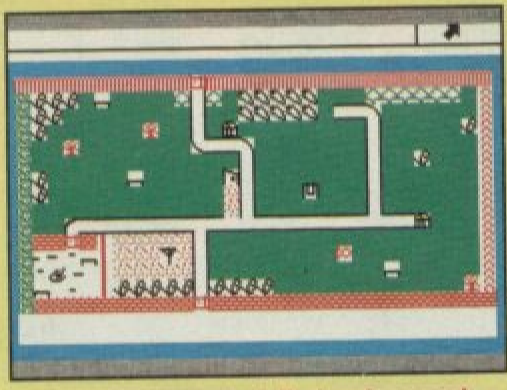




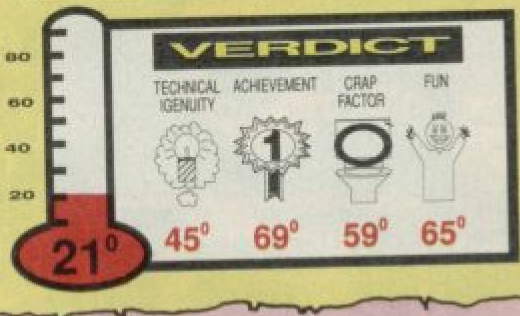
THE GARDEN CREATOR
By P Young, his 11-year-old son, his wife and countless other members of his family (probably)

What would your ideal garden look like then, viewers? Well, mine would have a sandpit and a football net and a climbing frame (with a big yellow slide) and a big paddling pool and it would be absolutely huge and all my friends could come round and we'd invite loads of scantily-clad babes and *(That's enough of that. Ed)* ...

Ahem. Actually, you just caught me deeply engrossed designing my 'ideal' garden on this *Garden Creator* program. It really is good 'fun' – you get all these graphic symbols and then you can sort of stick them on this grid thingy, thus designing your own personal and completely unique garden on your beloved Spec. And then you can start all over again and do another – the possibilities are endless. What fun, eh, boys and girls? (Actually, no. It's crap.)



And note the tastefully landscaped moat around the edge. (It's those little extra touches, it really is...)

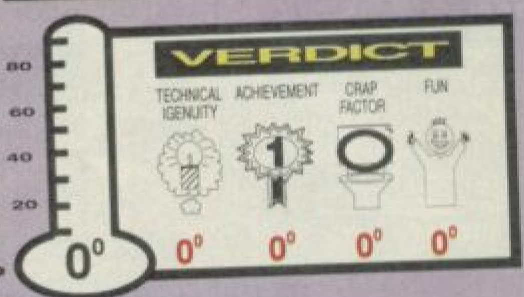




THE CASTLE OF QUIZZARD WIZZARD
Anon

Well, it had a pretty title screen but it didn't actually load. Still, it looked nice all the same.





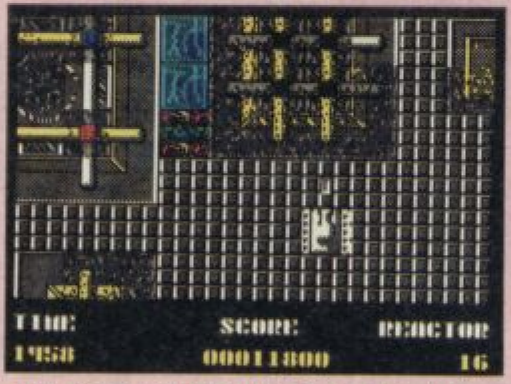
DESTRUX
By D Alderson

This one really is an ice cream short of a day trip to Wigan-On-Sea. For absolutely no apparent reason whatsoever you find yourself on this planet where several cities have rogue nuclear reactors in them (this is going to do wonders for the 'nuclear physics are for peace' movement, isn't it?). They're about to blow up and the only way to deactivate them is to clog them up with rocks. Fine. But the rocks have to come from factories dotted around which can only be exploded by crashing more rocks into them from more factories or high-explosive factories. Phew.

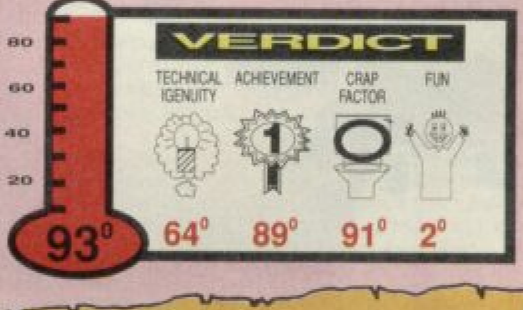
To perform this simple task you have 'control' of a tank (only nominal – I can't drive). Whoopee-doo. This tank can perform many strange acts like firing bullets to destroy houses and... and... well, it can move as well. Ho hum.

Basically, what I'm trying to tell you is that *Destrux* is in fact a strategy/puzzle-type game. And the worst kind actually. Not only that, but it's fiendishly hard to boot. I've got the game, hints, a complete solution and a video showing me exactly how to complete the bummer (although I can't actually watch it – I've got Beta), but I still haven't completed the first level. But then again, perhaps it's just me. Nor was my temper improved by the fact that every time I moved I seemed to fall into a hole I hadn't seen. Tch!

But in the good point department, there's loads. The graphics are quite clear (apart from those *?!@&% holes, of course) and, while they're not animated, they're also pretty colourful. The game itself is quite challenging, with puzzles-a-plenty to solve, and there are many frills such as the character-printing routines and the fact that you get seven credits (which you'll need, seeing as you have to be play like billio to get anywhere). So, erm, there you go. Unfortunately, reasonably good.



I bet they really stink, tanks do. No, think about it. All those bodies cooped up for hours in a really small space? Poooh! (Oh well... Onto the next screenshot.)

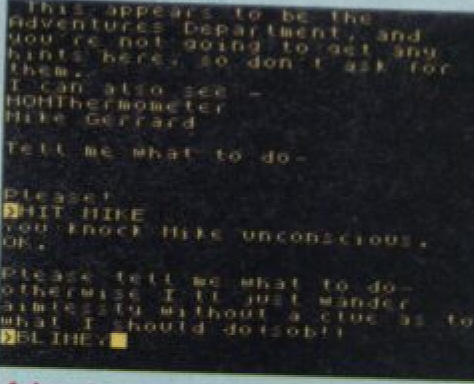


SAVE YS!
By James Chalmers

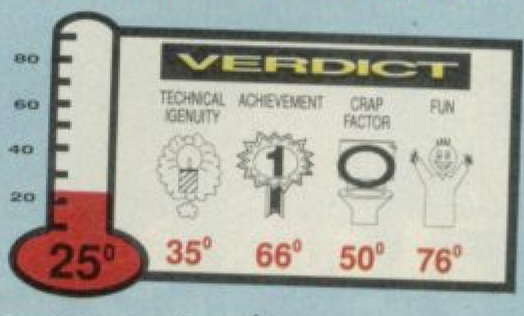
We weren't really planning to have adventures but this one is so hopeless it couldn't really have gone anywhere else. It's been done on *Quill*, this ancient adventure creator thingy, which wasn't really a very good start seeing as it isn't exactly very good (ie it's crap). The next mistake was to feature the loveable *YS* staff – hardly an entertaining subject to write a game about, but there you go.

The scene. Five thermometers have gone missing from their reviews, *YS* is due to go to press the following day, the air conditioning has failed and the entire *YS* staff have passed out to due to lack of oxygen. (Spookily close to the truth actually.) You take the part of the *YS* cleaner who has to walk around the *YS* offices, find the five missing thermometers and stick them on their reviews.

I'm not a big adventure man myself, but I do know a crap adventure when I see one. And I'm looking at it right now. Flush time!



Adventure games are bad enough. But bad adventure games? Spare me.

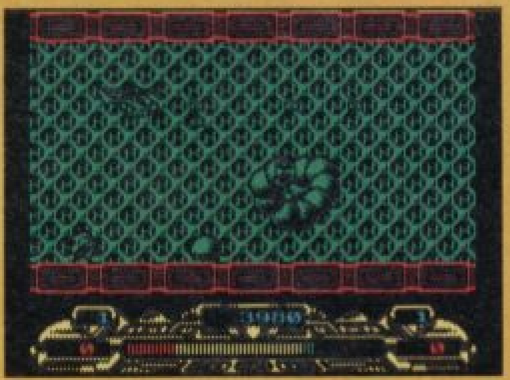


DESTINY MISSION
By 'Tiny' Williams and available from Williams Technology, 13A Bury New Road, Sedgeley Park, Prestwich, Manchester M25 8JZ for the tidy sum of £7.95

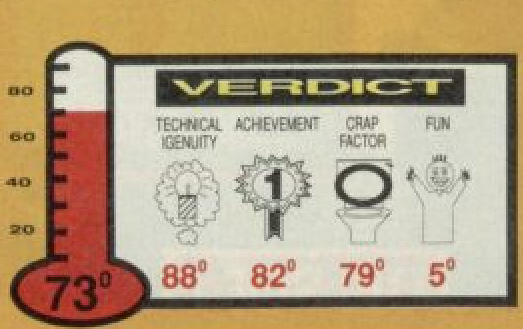
Oo-er – this is getting a bit worrying. Some of these games are getting quite funky – far too good in fact for the likes of Crap Game Corner. Including this one, which really is worryingly above average. In fact, I think I'd better have a lie down for a while.

Phew. That's better. Basically, *Destiny Mission* is a shoot-'em-up with you flying along shooting things in a helicopter (but I think I'll refrain myself from all those predictable chopper 'jokes', 'oo-ers' and 'fnars', if that's all right with you) in a horizontally-scrolling affair. There are some quite nice effects as well, for instance a parallax-scrolling background (ie it sort of moves at two different speeds), a 'tune' and things, and lots of little animated doobries as well, which all look rather nice thank you very much.

As I've said, *Destiny Mission* is sort of good and quite impressive for a home-grown effort, although it does get a little boring after a while. However, our chum 'Tiny' claims that he was the very mortal who converted *Xenon* to the Spec, but I'm not too sure whether to believe him or not. But if he did, then I can see why *Destiny Mission* is so good. But then again if he didn't, well – precisely.



Good game, good game! Hold the pack, we'll be right back! (Probably.)

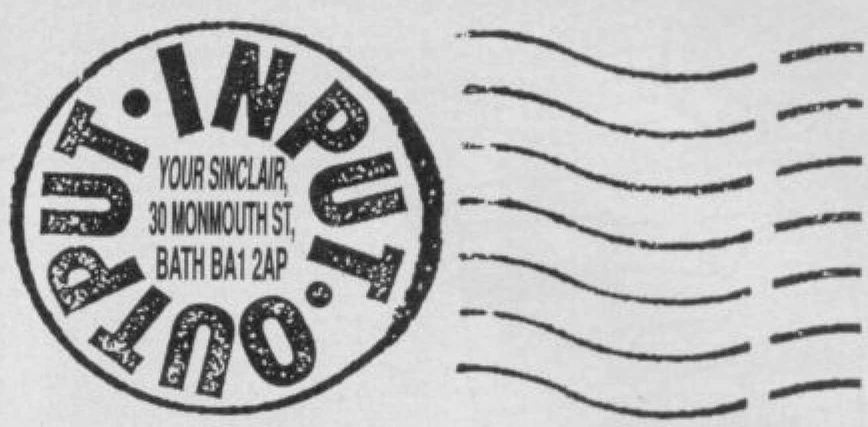


I ask you – was that wicked, cool, fab, ace, happenin', hip, trendy and generally quite good or what? Well, I had a laff anyway. But don't go away thinking that's the end of it all – oh ho no, not by a long way, matey. We will return in Crap Game Corner III – the trequel (ie the sequel to the sequel to the original, if you see what I mean). Oh, providing you people out there send in some crap games, that is. So don't just sit there, whip out your pinkies and get tapping – then send your efforts here to me (that's Rich Pelley, of course) at the Crap Game Corner, *Your Sinclair*, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2AP for my perusal. Okay? Good. And, well, erm, bye!


TAKE 5
NIGHT HUNTER
PUFFY'S SAGA
IRON LORD
TWINWORLD
SKATE WARS
SKATEWARS
A fast, violent and addictive SPORTS SIMULATION which will test your joystick and your nerves to the limit. The only way to win : aggressive tactics and strategic moves !
ST
C64 D + K7
CPC D + K7
SP D + K7
IRON LORD
Set in a massive and colourful medieval world, there's STRATEGY, ADVENTURE, ARCADE and much, much more here. This work of art will surely keep you occupied for weeks on end.
AG
ST
C64 D (K7 to come)
CPC D
SP D + K7
PC to come
PUFFY'S SAGA
Bright and colourful graphics as well as digitized sounds make this MAZE GAME extremely polished. In a word Puffy's Saga is an entertaining game that requires ARCADE skill as well as STRATEGY.
AG
ST
CPC D + K7
SP D + K7
C64 D (K7 to come)
NIGHT HUNTER
In this addictive horror-fantasy epic, you're Dracula, the blood-sucking Count. No doubt you'll get excited by this classy game whose sound, graphics and playability are equally impressive.
AG
ST
CPC D
SP D + K7
PC to come
TWINWORLD
Twinworld is a great combination of PLATFORM and ARCADE AVENTURE action. You'll get lots of fun wandering through the beautiful graphics of its 23 levels.
AG
ST
C64 D (K7 to come)
SP D + K7
CPC D + K7
PC to come
UBI SOFT
Entertainment Software



■ For sale Spec +2A, very good condition, over £100 worth of software titles, including *Licence To Kill, Road Blasters* and many more. All for £200. Phone Imtiaz on 0602 786766 after 6pm.
■ Spectrum 128K +3 for sale, £431 worth of games, 25 blank disks, Multiface 3, tape lead, joystick, adapter lead, sound through midi lead, *Afterburner* on disk, 28 mags. All worth £828. Sell for £400. Phone Paul on 061 320 4169 after 6pm.
■ For sale – Genius mouse with pad, interface + holder, all offers considered. Phone Rob between 4pm and 8pm on 0522 702588.
■ Spectrum 48K, £275+ of software, mostly new, lightpen, Turbo Interface, joysticks and mags. Will sell for £200. Ring 0924 250050 and ask for Ross (after 6pm).
■ Spectrum +3 for sale with zillions of games including Tasword +2 and +3 disks, tapes, Tas Sign etc. Please ring Colin on 0532 590067.
■ Spectrum 48K data recorder (Sony), joystick, interface, lightgun. Over £800 of games. All boxed with leads. Worth over £1,100 for the whole lot, I'll flog it for a paltry £250. Phone 0268 732838.
■ Spectrum +2 for sale, good condition, comes with Multiface 128, Quickshot joystick, interface, all leads, £500 worth of software. Good bargain at £150 ono. Ring 071 237 3202 and ask for Mathew after 6pm.
■ Sega video driver for sale. Unwanted gift, still boxed, includes two games worth over £70. Sell for £45. Phone 0268 732838.
■ Computer nut selling up to buy more. Got Speccy QL, CPC, ACE Memotech, lots of extras. Send sae for list to Jones, 2 Town Mead, Oakford, Devon EX16 9EW or phone 03985 438.
■ SAM Coupé 256K for sale! £200 for Spectrum games + 50 free games, demos, 8,000 colours, manuals, joystick. Buyer collects! (Under one month old!) £220 wanted. Tel Newcastle 0207 542026.
■ For sale – Spectrum + 2, with mouse, joystick, lightgun and six games. Also some other games. £150 ono. Tel 0495 214197 ask for Marcus after 4pm.
■ Spectrum +2 for sale, plus interface and joystick and over £200 worth of software. All the latest games. Computer in good condition. All I want is £120 ono. Ring 0532 600044. (Cash only.)
■ Spec +2 for sale. £750 of games (including *MicroProse Soccer* etc). Ideal if you want to upgrade. Worth £890, sell for incredible £220. Phone 0707 43210 any time and ask for Richard.
■ Spectrum +2, over £400 of software, mags, books, joystick. Software titles include *Afterburner, Red Heat* and *Hard Drivin'*. Worth £570, will sell for only £250. What a bargain. Phone 03416 673.
■ For sale – Spectrum 128K, lightpen, joysticks, £350+ of games and multiface. All for only £200 ono. Phone Neil on 0629 812084 between 4.30pm and 6pm weekdays. Thank you!
■ Wish to swop Speccy+ (and over 150 games incl *Chase HQ* and *Giants*, joystick, tape recorder) for Atari ST, preferably with some games. Tel Mat on Bristol 0272 561663.
■ Spectrum +2 for sale, comes with magazines, books, £200 worth of software, will sell at £115. Phone 0454 23701 or write to S Jones, 14 Birgage Road, Hawkesbury Upton, Badminton, Avon GL9 1BH.
■ Spectrum +3 with £200 games, two joystick interfaces, Quickshot 2 joystick, mouse with Artist 2, Multiface 3, seven 3" disks and cassette recorder with leads. Excellent condition, £350. Ring Burton on Trent 812043.
■ Spectrum +2, joystick, 50 games accessories £85. Also Brother HR5 printer (serial) plus leads, software £59 ono. James, 41C Barras Lane, Spon End, Coventry CV1 3BU.
■ Spectrum +3, three months old, tape recorder, Copiasoft, equal to Multiface 3, four disks, over £255 of tape software, POKEs, worth over £525. For price write to Miguel, Br Fisel 23, 6270 Seia, Portugal.
■ Spectrum +2 with Turbo RJM joystick, interface +160 games, worth over £400. £200 the lot. Ring 0622 671299 Maidstone after 6.30pm.
■ Mera Blonie printer for sale compatible with Spectrum +3 disk plus Tasword, Word Processor and two boxes of paper. Sell for £100. Paul McCormack, 051 207 0203.
■ 128K +2 with three joysticks and over £500 worth of software, including most full price games now available, sell all for £350 ovno. Phone Darren after 5.30pm on 081 392 1704.
■ Spectrum 128K +2, superb condition, boxed, ten starter games, will sell for £95 ono. Excluding TV, lead. Phone Steven on Ashford, Middx 0784 241237 between 4pm and 9pm any day.
■ Spectrum 128K +2, boxed, mouse, joysticks, £700 of games incl *Batman, Robocop, Run The Gauntlet*, RAM Turbo interface, £50 of mags. Worth £1,000 – quick sale £350 ono. Phone Mathew on 0225 333538.
■ Spectrum 128K +2 with two joysticks, excellent condition, hundreds of games and magazines. All worth around £1,000 – will sell for £200. Contact Philip 081 902 2447.
■ Spectrum +3 for sale. £100 ono, complete with joystick and manual. Excellent condition. Tel 0249 652489 after 5pm and ask for Keith.
■ SAM Coupé for sale. Boxed as new, hardly used. Joystick, games and mags also. £165 ono. Phone 07596 532 or contact Giles Sutcliffe at Waterside Cottage, Bishop Wilton, nr York.
■ For sale – SAM Coupé with leads, joystick, *Defenders Of The Earth* and tape recorder. Worth £215, will sell for £150. Contact Michael at Friern Road, London SE22 0AU.
■ Spectrum +2 with original games, Cheetah 2 joystick and Kempston interface – £70! Games can be bought separately for 50p and £1. Phone Brighouse718028 and ask for Martin.
■ Spectrum +3, over 150 tape games, Multiface 3, datacorder, disk games, plus much more. Worth over £700, sell for £200. Phone 0767 314882 after 5pm.



Remember, Spec-chums, if you want us to include your ad in the bountiful barg pages of Inny Outy you've got to stick 'em on the back of post card or envelope.



■ Wanted urgently – original Silvergrid Willow pattern for +2A Spectrum. Must be in good condition. Will pay cash. Please write or phone asap. Amanda Craig, 30 Lealies Drive, Larne, Co Antrim, N Ireland BT40 2BE. Tel Larne 70153.
■ Wanted *Typing Tutor* for 48K Spectrum +. Phone 031 666 2973.
■ Wanted *Mercenary I & II, Hitchhikers Guide, Driller II*. Will swop for *Shadow Skimmer, Knuckle Busters, Hydrofool, Rogue, Gyron*. One for one. Contact Craig Brown, 17 Autumn Grove, Welwyn Garden City, Herts AL7 4DB.
■ Desperately wanted – *Monty Is Innocent*. Will swop for *KnightMare* and/or *Greg Loses His Clock* and/or *Count Duckula*. Phone Paul Jones on 0204 22990. (Actually I'll pay if needs be.)
■ Please, please, please! Has anybody out there got any Commodore computer games? Contact Cerwyn Cilasbey, 44 St Adams Drive, Pucklechurch, Bristol BS17 3QQ. Send list, negotiate price.
■ Desperately wanted – cheats, POKEs, tips etc for *Batman The Movie*, willing to swop *Combat School, Matchday* or the original *Batman* for any helpful replies. Matthew Green, 65 Henly Road, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1RJ.
■ Wanted – Konix Speed King joystick. Any condition so long as Fire button works. Ring Steve on Glos 0452 619149.
■ Wanted! 48K+ Spectrum in working order. Leads and power pack preferable but not essential. Will pay £15 – £30. Tel 041 334 3496 and ask for John after 6pm Mon-Fri (or leave message).
■ Help!!! Will somebody sell me an original tape of *Lords Of Midnight* (plus instructions)? Mine's been chewed up by the cassette player. Write to Neil Ashmore, 5 Park Crescent, Furness Vale, Stockport, Cheshire SK12 7PU. (Hello to everyone at Stampiton.)
■ Mouse and art package wanted for 128K +2. Will swop for 20 games of your choice. Ireland if possible. Write to Brian Hurley, Boverstown, Navan, Co Neath, Eire.
■ Help! Novice needs a user's manual for a Timex Sinclair 2040 printer. I'm absolutely in the dark, any help appreciated. John Williams, 4 Welford Road, Barton, Bidford-on-Avon, Alcester C50 4NP.
■ Wanted – Sigmasoft hack-pack for one of *GAC*, Defpac, *Napolean At War*, or *Total Eclipse I & II*. Swop others for something interesting. Originals please. John, Middlegate, Doncaster DN5 9DU. Tel 0302 390554.
■ Spectrum +2 games for sale. Send 50p to Ben, 19 Vine Street, Stamford, Lincs PE9 2QE. I will send back a list of games and a free game. First caller gets free book. Send now.
■ I'm looking for *White Lightning* by Oasis Software (with manual!). Will pay a reasonable price. Ring Gavin on 081 393 7649 after 5pm.
■ Wanted! OCP tollkits – master, editor/assembler, plus Machine Code tester. Also, Star LC10 printer. Write to Graham Gudgin, 5 Croxton Close, Luton, Bedfordshire LU3 2UQ (with telephone number if possible).
■ Multiface 2 wanted for Speccy +2. Will pay up to £15. Write to Steve Numan, 21 Osborn Road, Sparkbrook, B'ham B11 1PA.
■ PCG's DTP pack (wordmaster, typeliner, headliner) wanted. Will pay very good price!! Also Spectrum RAM, Turbo Duel J/S, interface, Kempston, Sinclair cursor compatible with box, instructions & receipt. £7 ono. Tel 03943 7044.
■ Wanted desperately – *Bubble Bobble*. Will swop *Fiendish Freddy, Alpine Games* and *Road Runner*. Contact Hazel Douglas at 68 Loudown Crescent, Kilwinning KA13 6TS or phone 0294 52281.
■ Wanted – POKEs and cheats for *Galaxy Force, Renegade, Chase HQ, Running Man* or *Hellfire Attack*. Please help! Phillip Gruner, 40 St Mary's Avenue, Northwood, Middlesex HA6 3AZ.

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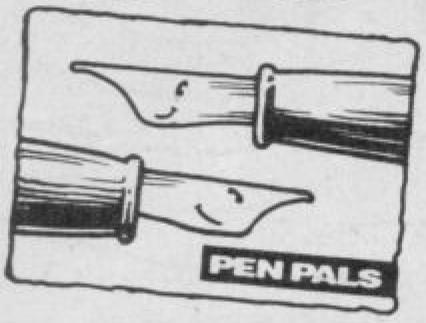
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Input-Output



■ I'd like to write to and swop games with a Speccy owner, aged around 11. By the way, I have a +2 Speccy. All letters answered. Get writing to Paul Duffy, 12 Park Grove Park, Mains, Erskine, Renfrewshire, Scotland PA8 7AR.
■ Wanted – pen pals of any age, any sex. Write from anywhere in the world to Shaton Cooper, 157 Newtown Road, Carlisle, Cumbria, England.
■ I'm Paul, aged 13, and I'm looking for a pen friend to swop games, tips, programs, preferably boy around 12-14 with sense of humour. 59 Milton Hall Road, Gravesend, Kent DA12 1QN.
■ Female wants to swop games with nice guys all over the world. Reply guaranteed. Tali-Brian, Trumpeluor – 30, Ramat-Hasharon, Israel. So what are you waiting for? Write now!!!!
■ Hi there. I'm looking for a pen pal who has a Spectrum+ 128/48K. Any age will do, but must be into TV and videos and be able to teach me Machine Code and swop games. Please send me a letter introducing yourself. PS I am 12 years old. David Hewell, 39 Kerrfield Estate, Duston, Northampton NN5 6JY.
■ Pen pal wanted. I would like somebody with good programming knowledge to help me learn MC. I own a +3. Alvin Smart, 26 Poulton Street, Kirkam, Preston PR4 2AB.
■ I'm 15 and looking for a pen friend from anywhere and of any age (preferably between 13–18). So write to Stephen King, 121 Lamlash Crescent, Cranhill, Glasgow G33 3XP.
■ Hi! I'm 19 years old and I'm looking for female pen pals from all over the world. Don't spend too much time thinking – just write to Stephen Sophos, Kato Dexameni, 34600 Nea Artake, Evia, Greece.
■ Alloah! Looking for an animal lover male/female to be pen pals with. Must have a Speccy +2, and if you're from Scotland then even better! Write to Billy R, 1 Hawthorn Drive, Harthill, Lanarkshire, Scotland ML7 5SC.
■ Hi. I'm an 11 year old boy seeking 11–13 year old boy for pen pal. My hobbies include soccer and computing and you must have a Speccy. I have games like *Batman* and *Crazy Cars II*. All letters answered. Bye! Michael Lewis, 10 St Davids Close, Southdown Park, Buckley, Clwyd, North Wales CH7 2AS.
■ I'm 16 and my interests include Lego and Action Man. If you have the same interests write to me at 44 Park Fields, Roydon, Essex CM15 4JP.
■ Hi! I'm a 13 year old male looking for a male or female pen pal. I have a Spectrum 48K and loads of games. Write to Wayne Moore, 46 Bryanston Avenue, Aylesbury, Bucks HP20 2BA.
■ Fella (17) wants 15-19 year old female pen pals from anywhere in world to rap about life, universe and gerbils (!). Scribble now to Gareth, 34 Torpeville, Moulton, Northampton NN3 1TR.
■ I'm a 17 year old Spectrum +3 owner. I'm looking for male/female pen pals to swop games. If you don't own a computer write to me and give me something to do. Maurilio Caires, Sitio Do Livramento, Madeira, Portugal, 9125 Canico.
■ Pen pals wanted about 11 years old. Boy or girl. Contact me on 041 638 5169 and ask for Stuart.
■ Anybody in America looking for a 16 year old British pen pal? Look no further – I'm Collette and I love NKOTB. Anybody can write. All letters answered, so get writing and tell me all about yourself (photo if possible please). 378 Easterly Road, Leeds, Yorkshire LS8 3AU.
■ Spectrum 48K users wanted to swop games, tips, etc. All the latest software incl *Turbo Outrun, Ghouls 'n' Ghosts*. Write to Karl Ace Wenn, 26 Quadrant, North Sheilds, Tyne and Wear NE29 7HP.
■ Are you reading this? If so write quickly to me because I have all the news in South America! I also have all the Spanish games. All letters replied. Marcelo Difede, Jose Pedro Varela U211A, Block P, Apto/240 – Montevideo, Uruguay 11600.
■ I'm 13 and after a pen pal in Germany, France or any other European country. Write in English, German or French to SJ Eaton, 2 Duston Wildes, New Duston, Northants, England NN5 6ND.
■ Hi! I'm 14 and desperately seeking pen pals. I like music, computers and having fun. Write to Jolyon Walter at Lynwood, Albany Hill, Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN2 3RX.



■ I want to swop *Gazza's Super Soccer* for *Op Thunderbolt* or *Power Drift* or *Myth*. Also I would like to swop other games budget and full price. Send your lists to John Bartholomew, 15 Innisfayle Park, Lisburn, Co Antrim, N Ireland BT28 2AS.
■ I want to swop *Batman The Movie* or *Power Drift* for *Rainbow Islands*. If so phone 0254 887789 between 4.30pm and 6pm and ask for Matt (originals only).
■ Wanted – *Strider*, will swop for *Renegade III*. Write to D Reeve, 3 Gloster Avenue, Upper Eastville, Bristol.
■ Wanted – *Dragon Ninja, Chase HQ, Op Wolf, Batman The Movie, Rick Dangerous*. Will swop for *Indy And The Last Crusade, MicroProse Soccer, Kenny Dalglish*. One for one. Tony M Hardy, 36 Tithe Barn Crescent, Hallith Wood, Bolton, Lancashire BL1 B5Y.
■ I'll give *Indy* and *Untouchables* to anyone who's got *Cybernoid I* and *II* or I'll give *Ollie & Lisa III* to anyone who's got *Dizzy I*. No copies please. Ashley Faulkner, 5 Magheralave Park STW, Lisburn, Co Antrim, N Ireland BT28 3NN or phone 0846 671589.
■ Wanted *Emlyn Hughes Int Soccer, Pro Tennis Tour*. Will swop for *Gazza's Super Soccer* and *Crazy Cars II*! Phone 04463 3541 and ask for Sam. Please hurry. Bye!
■ Will swop *Football Manager II* and *Exp Kit* for *Power Drift* or *Hate*. Stewart Macleod, 8 Thornwood Ave, Lenzie, Glasgow G66 4EL.
■ Wanted *Double Dragon* to exchange with *OutRun*. Please write to Samuel Carlton, 13 White Edge Moor, Liden, Swindon, Wilts SN3 6LX. And make sure it's for the 48K.
■ Wanted – *Chase HQ* swop for *Myth*. Boxed original only. Write to Eoghan Ryan, Rocklands, Shanaway Road, Ennis, Co Clare, Ireland.
■ Lots of games to swop. Send list for my list. Also has anyone spare POKEs to give me. Phone between 4-5 o'clock. Ask for Stuart Clark at 0706 821164.
■ *California Games, Blast Compiler* (both still in packaging), *The National* and *Battle Stations*. All for £20 ono. Phone Martin on 0844 237 296.
■ I will swop my *Flying Shark* and *Predator* for your *Batman The Movie*. Please ring (Ashbourne) 45551 soon. Originals only please.
■ *Barbarian The Adventure*, unwanted birthday present, still in plastic wrapping. Selling for bargain price of £5 or will swop for *Footballer Of The Year II*. Phone after 4pm on 0772 685530.
■ I have over £100 worth of games and a Cruiser joystick and interface. Will sell for £70. Send sae for list to A Martin, 262 Beacon Road, Wibsey, Bradford BD6 3DY.
■ Will swop *Zythum* and *Gregory Loses His Clock* for *R-Type*, and any reasonable budget game for *Backgammon*. If you can comply with either of these ring 081 868 9772, after 5pm.
■ Send sae for software list prices from 75p old and new titles. For a free list contact S Hogarth, 11 Brentwood Close, Holywell, Whitley Bay, Tyne and Wear NE25 8LZ.
■ Ten brilliant games, all boxed originals, £3 each. Wafadrive with printer leads, boxed £25. Games include *The Train, Bowderash IV, Wizard War II* etc. Phone 0376 516752 ask for Ben.
■ Will swop *Dragon Ninja* and *OutRun* for *Altered Beast*. Also swop *Ultimate Play The Game* for *Strider*. Phone Simon after 4pm on 0429 268793.
■ Level 9 adventure games, *Red Moon, The Worm In Paradise, Dungeon Adventure, Emerald Isle, Adventure Quest* – £5 each or £20 the lot. All originals. Contact P Mitchell at 34 Butt Park Road, Honichknowle, Plymouth, Devon PL3 3NU (or phone 0752 708439).
■ Software for sale from 50p to £3. Please send sae for list of over 150 games. Also utilities. (And I'm desperate for *GAC*.) Contact Jane Burman at 8 Willow Court, Hutton Cranswick, East Yorkshire YO25 9QL.
■ Right, here's what I need – *Midnight Resistance, Mikie, Ikari Warriors, Double Dragon II, Rainbow Islands*. I'll swop *Barbie I* and *II, R-Type, Cookie* and *Repton Mania*. Contact James Muir at Silver Crescent, Lane Road, Wakescolne Green, Essex or tel 0787 224206.



■ Yes, its here – *+3 User*. The only decent magazine. Send 80p and one blank disk to Roger Rountree, 8 Drumcree Grove, Portadown, Co Armagh, N Ireland. Remember, do you want street cred?
■ *Pacat 3* is out now, at 70p. POKEs, maps, reviews, cheats, compos, tips, hints & more. Win £60. Send sae for FREE catalogue of 2,000+ POKEs, multifaces, PBMs, fanzines and more. A Degnan, 84 Spalding Road, Hartlepool, Cleveland TS25 2JP.
■ *Spec-Tech*, the tape magazine for the '90s. Pages on music, graphics, reviews, competitions and lots more – only £2. Don't miss it monthly. Send to Jason, 7 Kitson Avenue, Jacksdale, Nottingham NG16 5JE.
■ *TTM* – new tape magazine for all Spectrums. Pages on computers, music, sport, competitions and more! For latest issue send blank tape and 80p to S Kerr, 69 Strathay Road, Perth, Scotland PH1 2NA.
■ Hi, I'm Ben and I'm the Editor of *Thursday Week*, the latest, greatest mag ever. I need jokes, stories and ideas. Send to *Thursday Week*, 167 Fold Croft, Harlow, Essex CM20 1SL.
■ *In-Touch* – it's new, it's wild. With news, POKEs, maps, solutions, cheats. Costs only £1 plus large sae. Send to J Burman, 46 Silver Street, Barnetby, Humberside.



■ Fastline is a new Sam Coupé user group and PD Library. Sorry, only for users of the 3.5" drive! Please send an sae for details to Fastline, 1 Ryelands Place, Kilgetty, Dyfed, S Wales SA68 0UX. Demo's updated monthly. We have a 48K emulator called Emline.
■ Multiface POKEs, hints and cheats for over 100 games, old and new. Send 80p to MCW Games, 53 Giles Road, Lichfield, Staffs WS13 7JY.
■ *Trivia League* – more players needed. First game free from BG Townsend, 105 Tintagel House, Salisbury Road, Edmonton, London N9 9TF.
■ New PBM coming soon. Please send sae for full details. The cheapest prices and the best prizes – have you got what it takes? Find out by contacting Jane Burman, Willow Court, Hutton Cranswick, E Yorks YO25 9QL.
■ *The Oakes* is a classic PBM. All the features of the horse-racing season. For more details write to Scott Giffiths at 17 Woodstock Street, Hucknall, Notts NG15 7SP.

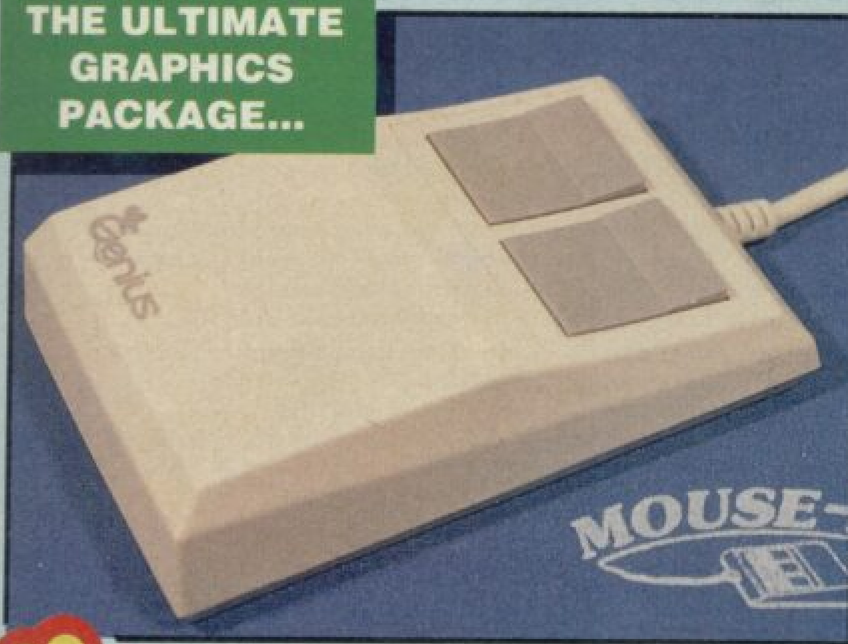


■ Hi!! Three male Ninja Warriors aged 14 would like to hear from three sexy chicks, so please write now to John, Jon and Paul at 52 Bramhall Lane, Davenport, Stockport, Cheshire SK2 6HZ.
■ Adventurous 12 year old male seeks good looking 11–12 year old female. Must like comics and books, also send photo. Write to Andrew Munn, 70 Carsock St, Haghill, Glasgow G31 3PH.
■ Wanted, good looking 12–13 aged girl, mature. I class myself as a reasonably good-looking boy. Please send letter and photo to Edward East, 20 Trenchard Road, Andover, Hants SP11 8HB.
■ Hello! 14 year old boy looking for a 14–16 year old gorgeous female. Please enclose a photo. All letters answered. Going cheap, hurry now, last one! Alan Hector, 9 Hillside Cottages, Glenboig, Strathclyde, Scotland ML5 2QY.
■ Fourteen year old hunk of a guy seeks 14–16 year old sexy female who is into wild parties. WARNING! My pals say I am crazy. Get writing now (and please enclose photo). Stuart Harris, 11 Hillside Cottages, Glenboig, Coatbridge, Bonny Scotland ML5 2QY.
■ Lonely 18 year old girl looking for boy about 18–20 years old who loves pop music etc. Please write sending a photo if possible to Carolanne Blues, 24D Lock End Road, North Musselburgh, Scotland.
■ Lonely 18 year old martial artist seeks female martial artist or gymnast, 17 to 19 years old. Philip Cross, 23 Crescent Road, Whittlesey, Cambridge PE7 1XY. Send photo please. (Must also like cycling.)
■ Lonely 15 year old boy looking for girl about same age. Interests include computing music. If interested write to me, Simon Cooke, 184 Ings Lane, Rochdale, Lancs OL12 7IG.

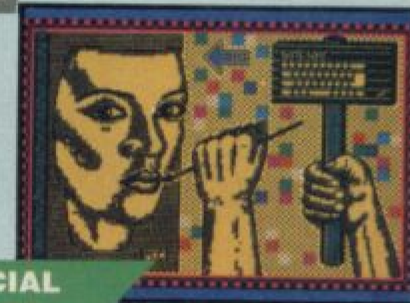
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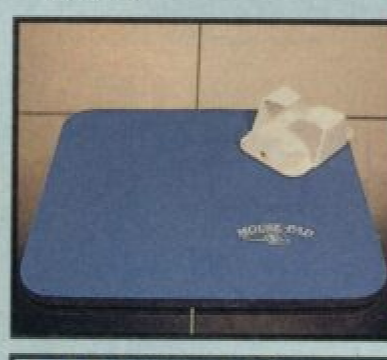
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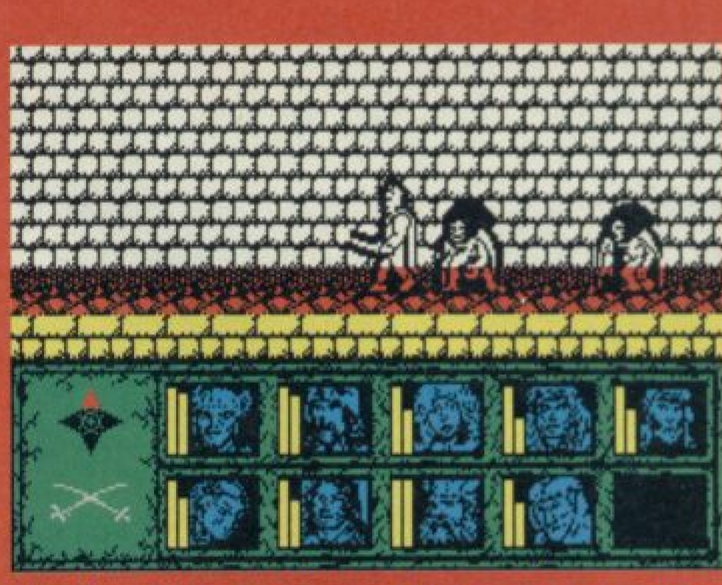
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DRAGONS OF FLAME

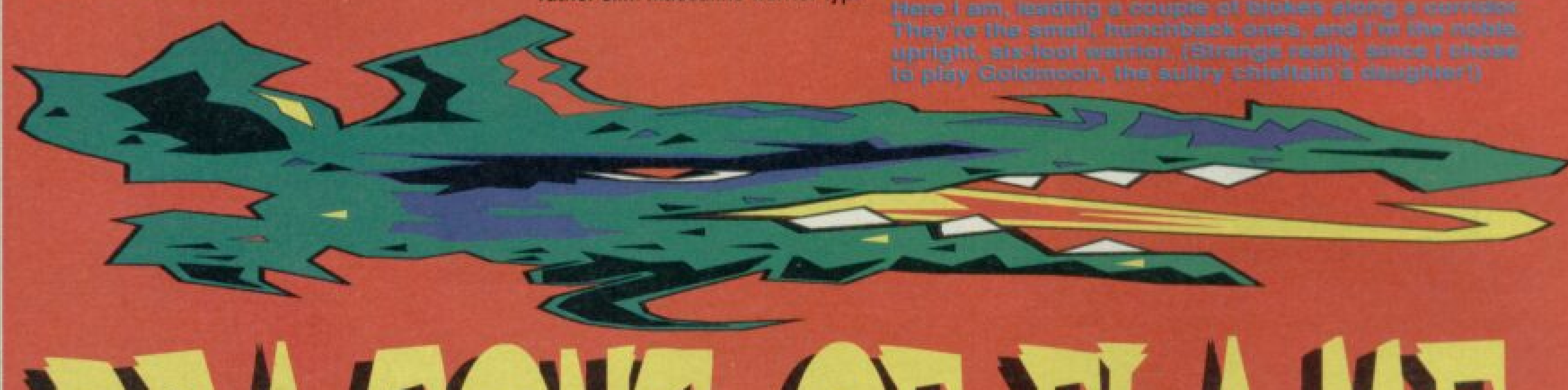
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Davey *Dragons Of Flame* is the latest addition to US Gold's series of games inspired by TSR's *Advanced Dungeons And Dragons*. Remember *Heroes Of The Lance*? Well, that was the first *AD&D* game which appeared way back in March '89 and received a hearty thumbs-up (a Megagame no less, fact fans) from Phil 'Snouty' South. *Dragons Of Flame* is another one in the series, and continues the scenario established in that title. And what a scenario it was...



Here I am, leading a couple of blokes along a corridor. They're the small, hunchback ones, and I'm the noble, upright, six-foot warrior. (Strange really, since I chose to play Goldmoon, the sultry chieftain's daughter!)



Everything takes place on the Planet Krynn. It's been 300 years since the old gods deserted the populace and left them at the mercy of the evil Queen Takhisis. I guess the folks just had to Krynn and bear it (groan), especially after the Companions (a bunch of heroes upon whom everyone was pinning their hopes) went and got trapped by the Draconians. To cut a long story short, the chums were rescued by Elvis just in the nick of time – er, sorry, that's Elves. Anyway, this is where you come in, getting to control the Companions, via whoever you elect as their leader. In the meantime, Krynn is in a right old two-and-eight. There's all manner of man and beast wandering around, you can't turn corners for bumping into chests (good news for Maria Whittaker fans) and evil is most definitely afoot. (I quite like feet. Why do they always have to be evil?)

The game system tries to emulate the *D&D* system, except with only one player and with the computer as Dungeon Master. All the characters have the familiar list of attributes (strength, wisdom, dexterity, intelligence) and these help you to strategically employ the 'best man for the job' (to coin a phrase, but let's not be sexist – there are 'Companion chicks' as well). *(Sexist! Ed)* With trillions of spells and numerous commands at your disposal (accessed via menus) you set out on your quest to unite the good folk of the land and duff up loads of baddies.

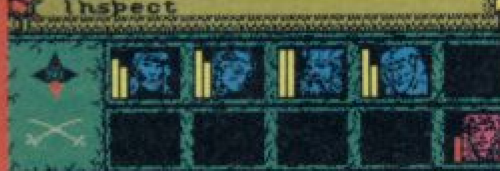
Sounds good, doesn't it? Er, the only problem is the game doesn't live up to expectations. The graphics aren't anything to write home about (you only ever see one character, ie the same sprite, a rather slim masculine warrior type – even if you choose to control Tasselhoff Burrfoot, a rather fat mamma with ginormous ears), and I found the control system infuriating to say the least. Basically, you press the usual Up/Down/Left and Right keys in the combat sequence (along with diagonal jumps and high or low blows) but – and here's the tricky bit to get to grips with – when you're not in combat your Left/Right keys move you physically left and right on the screen, while the Uppie/Downie keys toggle your viewpoint to east/west again. So going left or right takes you, er... east or west. All this probably sounds totally clear (unusual but clear) and I'm sure you're thinking I'm a right old simpleton, but, believe me, it is very easy to go around in circles. With only about three basic backgrounds wandering around corridors soon becomes tedious.

Fighting monsters is okay. You keep having to flick to character charts to check physical and magical weapons etc then hack. There is some variety in that you can hack up, down or in the middle and that you've got both close-combat weapons (swords and the like) and range weapons (arrows and spears). However to kill a few you'll be wandering around uninspiring corridors for ages.

Although these computer interpretations can't compete with real *D&D* (with loads of chums, maybe some little lead characters, and those jolly little pointy multi-sided dice), *D&D* strategy addicts probably won't think it's too bad. Sadly, I suspect your average Spec-chum (like humble ol' me) will be left uninspired.



Oops! I seem to have turned into a dead end (that's why I'm leaping about in frustration). Better head back the way I came, guess.



Hmm, there's something funny about this message. (I know, it's spookily appropriate to the game in hand!)

finalverdict

80
60
40
20

LIFE EXPECTANCY	GRAPHICS	ADDICTIVENESS
60°	68°	60°

DIAGNOSIS
Good potential, but doesn't deliver the goods. *D&Ders* probably won't find it that bad though.

INSTANT APPEAL
65°

65°

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ST. DRAG

Remember our giant shoot-'em-ups guide from a couple of issues back? (Snazzy, wasn't it?) We raved on about Activision's *R-Type* conversion a bit, didn't we? (Hardly surprising really – it is one of the best Speccy shoot-'em-ups ever!) Well, *St Dragon*, from new software label Storm, looks just the same – but with knobs on! MATT BIELBY just had to pop along to investigate!



There's quite a bit of explaining to be done right here at the beginning so you'll know what I'm wobbling on about, but I'm not going to do it. Pop over to the 'What On Earth Is...?' bit at the end if you're confused about Jaleco, Storm or whatever, but otherwise we'll dive in head-first – you'll have to pick things up as best you can as we go along.

Right, to the game itself. A picture's worth a squillion words (or so they say) so it might be wise to take a few ganders at the screens before we go any further. Back already?

Okay. What did you manage to work out? If you said it's a horizontally-scrolling shoot-'em-up, then you're absolutely right (but I'm hardly impressed). A horizontal scroller with little space ships in it? Yes, okay. And one with a nifty metallic look to everything? Getting warmer, but I think you're missing something. Look, what if I was to tell you there's a giant alien spaceship on one level that more than fills the screen (and which you have to fly all the way around, destroying one bit at a time)? Sounds familiar yet? Yes! It's an unashamed *R-Type* clone, isn't it!? (But – I hasten to add – one of the best yet!) Hurrah!!

In fact, at first glance, *St Dragon* really does look just like *R-Type* with knobs on. Or rather, with a tail on. You see, your little spaceship is a wiggly dragon/snake-shaped doobrie, the tail being far more invulnerable than the head of the ship, so you can sort of wrap it round yourself when you're in real trouble, giving a similar degree of protection to the droid/ball thing you could stick on the front or back of your ship in *R-Type*.

Plot is of the standard 'quest against an evil empire' sort (though in this case you've got to rescue a giant space-dragon from the baddies) and that's really all you need to know. Oh yes, except (of course) that things really have moved on a-pace from the original *R-Type*, and the baddies in *St Dragon* do much more interesting and complicated things.

So, want to know more? Then come with me, let's nip on a train down to London (unless you live there already of course, in which case you can meet me at the station), make our way to the swank(ish) Storm offices near Clapham Junction, and take a gander for ourselves.

A chat with the crew

Dan Marchant is the software manager in charge of this project, so let's have a word with him first.

Hi, Dan! How's is going, matey?

Really well, actually. We've at last got a lot (though by no means all) of the graphics sorted, so things are starting to really come together. Up until now, instead of spaceships, we had all these rubbishy little sprites drawn by the programmer whizzing around all over the screen, including little messages like 'I can't draw' standing in for baddies and things. In fact (by a spooky coincidence) the programmer's just over there. He's called Andy Taylor. Why don't we pop over and talk to him?

And why not? What a splendid idea! Hello, you must be Andy. How's it going?

Oh, okay actually. We've at last got Virgin's Judge Dredd *out of the way (the last game I programmed), so I'm concentrating totally on* St Dragon *at the moment. I've just returned to programming actually – Dredd was the first since some Codies budgie stuff about four years ago. I've been in Germany and all sorts since then. Sean*

ST DRAGON ▸ STAGE BY STAGE

Okay, Dan, can we go through all the different levels and the differences between them?

Level One ✳ ✳ ✳

Sure thing. Okay, this first level (the one you can see in the screenshots) is set over the surface of some alien planet. The baddies are of the mechanical crab, larvae, snake and insect variety in the main – someone took weeks going through the coin-op giving names to them all and working out all their individual abilities! – but towards the end of the level you get the most spectacular baddies, which are these giant mechanical pumas, which leap at you and are very hard to kill. End-of level-guardian is a giant (mad) cow with rockets for feet. Bizarre!

Level Two ✳ ✳ ✳

This one's in a sort of alien jungle, populated with mechanical jellyfish, butterfly and *R-Type* snake lookalikes. There are some laser-firing rocks in here too, a wraith thing (which is like an evil mirror-image version of yourself), and a bizarre flying saucer at the end that splits in half and shoots a weird pattern of stars all over the place.

Level Three ✳ ✳ ✳

This is more your traditional *R-Type*-style tunnel affair. There are slugs crawling along the floors and ceilings, giant laser ships that almost block your path, a bizarre thing that bounces along on one foot (and looks like a robotic version of one of those cartoons from *Monty Python*), and a rather indescribable end-of-level monster. What, you really want me to try and describe it to you? Oh, alright. It's sort of like an alien from, er, *Alien*, trapped in a test tube. The tube splits open, and it shoots fireballs which move in a sort of maze pattern, creating a weird network of flames which you've got to avoid. Actually, I find it totally impossible, this bit.

Level Four ✳ ✳ ✳

This is set in space, with the baddies including alien spaceships that appear to be totally made up out of tubes. The end-of-level monster looks like an upside-down bath tub (or perhaps one of those old Mallard steam trains) and drops from the top of the screen, before spewing out various horrible, um, 'thingies'.

Level Five ✳ ✳ ✳

We're not sure if we'll be able to do this one in the Speccy version yet, but, if we do, it's the one with a giant alien spaceship you have to fly around, making sure you don't get crushed at the edges of the screen, frazzled by the rocket motors or shot to pieces by the various gun emplacements.

Level Six ✳ ✳ ✳

A space port level with giant cranes and so on to avoid, big drill heads that drop from the ceiling, and a giant baddie that consists of loads of stars that bounce around the screen. One neat touch on this level is that you can see a massive graphic of the trapped dragon you've got to rescue (which looks like an organic, and five hundred times bigger, version of yourself) revealed slowly behind you as you progress. Finish the game, and you get a final screen of the two dragons flying off the planet together. (Well, you do in the arcade version anyway!)

GON

McClurg (yes, like Doug McClurg from The Virginian and all those crappy monster films, fact-fans), did the graphics (he's an old budget man too) and I think Tony Williams will do the music.

Brillo. Any big problems with it?

Well, we realised quite early on that we'd never get it all in 48K, so it's 128-only game I'm afraid. You could call that a problem if you're a humble 48K Speccy owner.

I should cocoa! What else?

Well, the sprite system caused some probs too – there are some huge sprites in here, some half the size of the screen, which use up a vast amount of memory. The other thing is that in St Dragon each alien seems to make a much more complicated series of moves than in, say, R-Type, so we've got to try and reproduce them all, which is pretty complicated. That's all the really difficult stuff, I think. The rest was just very hard.

Erm, righty-ho.

SO WHAT ON EARTH IS...

... Storm?

A-ha! Now you're asking. Well, it's a software house, isn't it, and the reason you've never heard of it before is because it's new. Or rather, it's sort of new. You see, the company and people behind Storm have been around for quite a while now, it's just that they've always been a bit behind the scenes. Their proper name is actually The Sales Curve, and they're a bunch of programming and marketing people who've got very close ties with Accolade in the UK (in fact, they share the same offices), have produced hit games like *Silkworm*, *Ninja Warriors* and the upcoming *Judge Dredd* for Virgin in recent(ish) months, and are generally rated by 'those who know' as being worth watching over the next six months or so – they could well be rather 'big'.

... Jaleco?

Well, they're the coin-op people who came up with the original *St Dragon* machine, and they're fairly unknown too. Besides *St Dragon*, you may have seen their Porsche rally game *Big Run*, which allowed you to link up a series of machines to play your friends (we covered it in *Slots Of Fun* last year) or the super-sickly-cute *Rodland*, which is like *Bubble Bobble* crossed with *My Little Pony*. *St Dragon* will be the first of their games to be converted to the Speccy (that we can think of at least – let us know if we're wrong) but (spook!) the other two will be done by Storm later in the year.

... Dan Marchant?

He's just this blond bloke who works at The Sales Curve and who supervised the development of *St Dragon*. You don't need to worry about him too much.

✳ DRAGON'S TEETH ✳

As you might expect with this sort of a game, there are oodles of extra weapons and abilities to collect from dead aliens along the way. And here (unless I've forgotten one or two in all the excitement) they are...

N Normal bullets, which you can upgrade until they're firing three waves of five bullets each – ie 15 at once!

P Power-up, which increases the power of the weapons you already have.

F Fireballs, the most powerful weapon for general use.

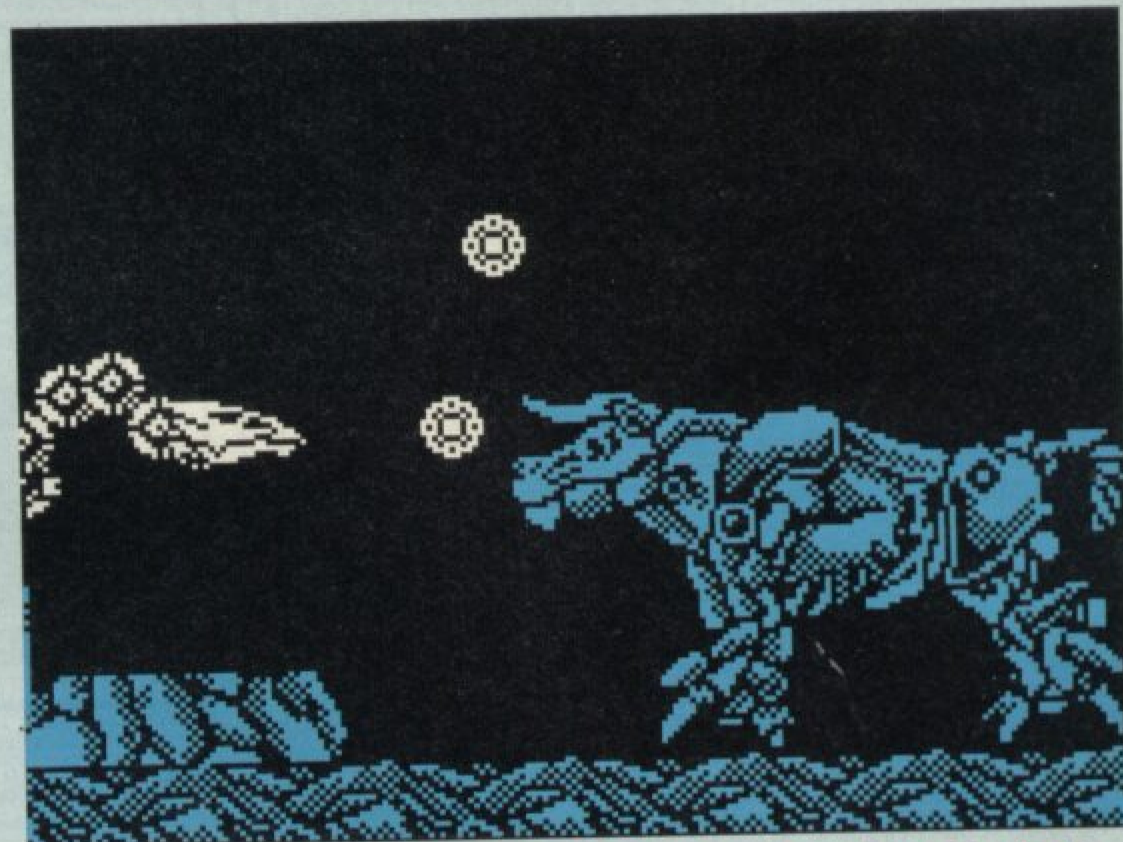
B Bouncing bombs – impressive, but only of any real use on certain stretches of the game, when they can take out things that are outside your line of sight.

L Ring lasers – a collection of five sort of interlocking rings that spread out for multiple hits. If a group of rings kills a small, unprotected baddy, only one or two will be used up in the hit, leaving the rest to carry on until they touch something else.

S Increased speed (obvious, really).

T Turrets – these fire a twin fireball in the direction the ship was last moving, so just knock the joystick for a pico-second and you'll be able to take out things immediately below you (or wherever).

H Hyper – the best add-on going. It doesn't last long, but it makes the ship invulnerable, kills everything you touch, and gives you maximum firepower on all the weapons you've got. (Hurrah!)



Blimey O'Reilly O'Rourke! It's a blooming giant mechanical cow thingie, the end of level baddie from the first part of the game, fact fans! (A quick hint – try shooting him in the head. It nearly always works with these things.)



Down, kitty, down! (There are about nine of these on the first level!)



Eek! It's loads of rocket-heads, a few green crabs and a purple thing!



Um, some more green things, lots of purple ones and a fireball.



Some rocket heads, a tree and, um, some other stuff.

FAX BOX

Game	*St Dragon*
Publisher	Storm
Programmers	Andy Taylor (code) & Sean McClurg (graphics)
Price	To be announced
Release date	Late September

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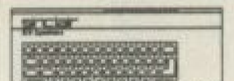
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- SHOCKS

Hurrah for Christmas! From this issue onwards the games will be coming thick and fast – and they're the biggies too! Watch out next issue for *Total Recall*, *Robocop II*, *S.C.I.*, *Days Of Thunder* and *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles*, plus reviews of this little lot...

Plotting
Ocean

It's cute, it's colourful, it has an incomprehensible title, and it features a vegetable! Yes, this conversion of Taito's arcade puzzler has you playing what appears to be a small potato. But not just any old small potato! (Oh no!) No, this potato sticks to walls, pushes blocks, jumps for joy when you complete a screen, and (you guessed it) bursts into tears when you fail.

The idea is that you have to push the block that the potato is holding into another with the same design, one of which you should be able to find in the stack in the corner of the room (and then keep doing it until you've removed the specific target number for that screen).



Hurrah! We've cleared a screen! (Easy-peasy it was too!)

You can shove them horizontally, or you can bounce the block off the ceiling from above – whereupon the target(s) disappears from the overall pattern, and the others sort of collapse into the space it's left (like in *Boulderdash*). Each time you score a hit, you swap the block you threw for the one that's behind the last one destroyed – a bit of forward-planning is thus required before you make each move, especially on the more complicated later levels.





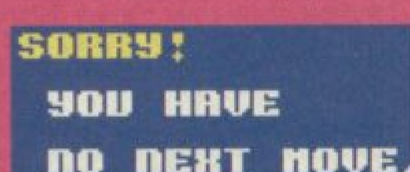
Obviously you're aiming to knock away the maximum number of similar tiles with each block you fire, while being careful you don't accidently get yourself into a situation where things are stacked so there's no way you can hit the next target. Miss a tile and you're given a 'wild card' block which will destroy anything it's aimed at – there aren't many of these though, and once you use them all up you've lost the game.

Presentation looks like it's all very colourful and extremely swish, with obstruction pipes (which can only be passed through one way, limiting the number of move options open to you), increasingly crazy arrangements of blocks, and (it says here) the 'Special Block' (which is often well buried among other blocks but gives you an extra life if you manage to hit it) making things more difficult as you go on.

And that's about it really. Lovers of such addictive puzzlers as *Tetris*, *Klax* or *Pipe Mania* (or, indeed, anyone who doesn't mind exercising his/her grey matter a bit) should keep an eye out for *Plotting*. - it looks like it might be a bit of a corker. We'll have a full review next issue.



A-ha! This shows the bouncing-the-bricks-off-the wall bit. (Good, eh?)





Hey, we've just thought of something. What if he's not a potato – but a lemon?

Star Control
Accolade

Oo-er. This looks a bit complicated. That's probably because it's an American game. Or, at least, it was. It first cropped up on boring IBMs and things a month or two back, but Accolade have decided that it should be possible to cram it all into a Speccy and turn it into a proper British game.



So what's it all about then? (Apart from being really complicated, that is.) Well, the thing is that the Hierarchy, led by the dreaded Ur-Quans (oh no – not the Ur-Quans!), has attacked the Earth, and probably a few other stars and things as well, and you've been given the job of co-ordinating Earth's defences. Something like that, anyway. What this involves is choosing lots of options from menus and shooting things.

But what options? And what things? Well, for a start there's a lot of strategy involved. You can colonise planets, attack enemy positions on them, explore them and set up mines. You've also got this fleet of ships which need to be kept in tip-top condition. The trouble is, so has the enemy. This is where the shooting bits come in.

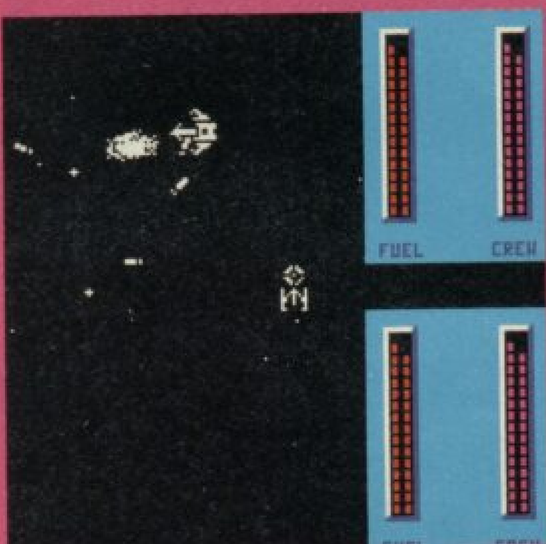
The shooting takes place in a scrolly sort of window, with stars whizzing past in the background and all the trimmings. The two ships are controlled with the usual Left, Right and Thrust keys, along with Fire of course. As well as blowing up the enemy you'll need to keep an eye on your crew, who'll be depleted each time you get hit, and fuel and all that kind of stuff. There are various kinds of ships, each of which have different characteristics, so tactics will have to be adapted accordingly.

What else? Oh yes, those options. Well, you can choose who controls each side, so you can either play the computer or one of your chums, and you can also vary the level of control the computer has over each side (for example, it'll do the shooting bits for you if you want). You can also choose from various practice scenarios if playing the whole game sounds a bit much, and even just have a go at the shooting (if you're feeling really unadventurous).

So it looks like *Star Control*'ll be a bit on the massive side. We haven't seen much of the game yet, just odd bits and pieces, but there's an enormous pile of instructions which gives the general gist of it. And we're impressed, we really are. There's oodles of strategy to get to grips with and all sorts of hidden intricacies to discover lurking in the depths of the manual. If Accolade pull it off, this should be one of the Christmas biggies. If they don't... well, let's just hope they do, eh?



That Earthling Cruiser design looks slightly familiar, doesn't it? Now where have we seen that before? Hmm... oh yes! *Blake's 7*! (*Cloti Ed*)



Hmm, this sort of reminds us of something. Does it remind you of anything? That's right – *Asteroids*!



Can't think of anything else to write about this game really. Erm, um...



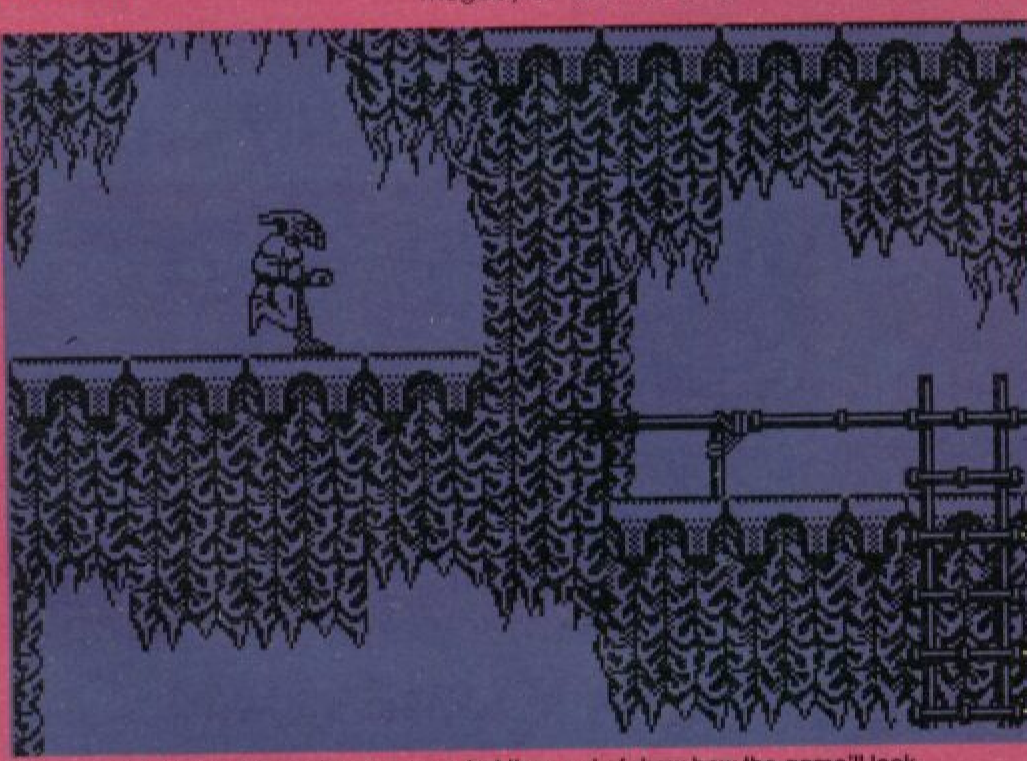
...there seem to be lots of little space ships, with crews and, um... (help!).

Shadow Of The Beast
Gremlin

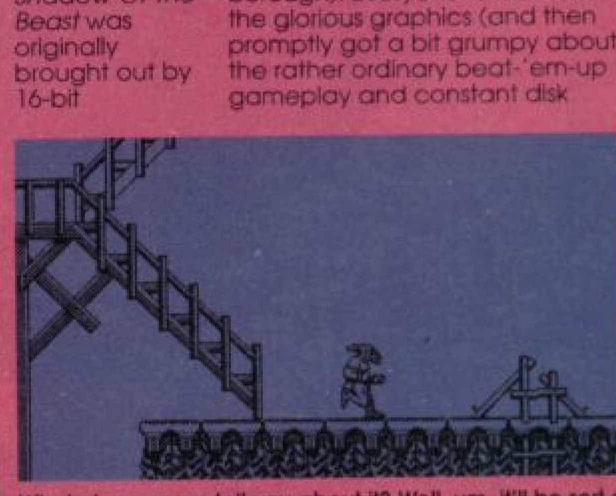
That's right – unbelievable as it sounds, Gremlin Graphics have attempted the impossible – crushing about 30 trillion megabytes' worth of critic-stunning, super-colourful 16-bit graphics into the Speccy. And how have they done it? (Looks at screens.) Oh, um, they haven't.

Those of you with short memories (or absolutely no interest in 16-bit computers) may never of heard of *Beast*, so here's the potted *YS* history lesson. *Shadow Of The Beast* was originally brought out by 16-bit specialists Psygnosis last summer (who dipped their fingers into Speccy waters a couple of tentative times last year with things like *Captain Fizz*, but have otherwise never been heard of in this borough). Everyone raved over the glorious graphics (and then promptly got a bit grumpy about the rather ordinary beat-'em-up gameplay and constant disk



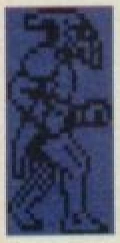


These are still early mock-up-type screens, but they sort of show how the game'll look.



What else can we tell you about it? Well, um, it'll be sort of blue, we think it's fair to say. And, erm, it'll have stairs in it.

swopping).
Gremlin's 8-bit conversions, including the Speccy one, are almost complete (at last) but – oh no! – where has all that colour gone?



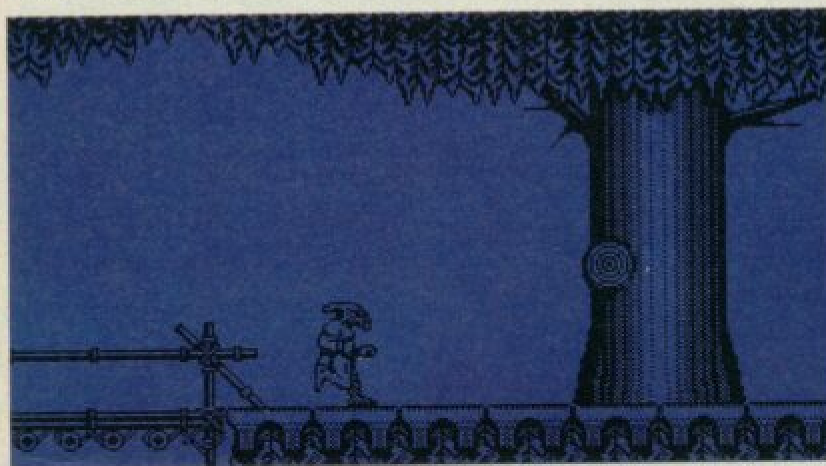
They seem to have opted for glorious monochrome instead. (Thinks.) We'd better see what's going on. (Dials Gremlin's number.) Hello, Gremlin Graphics? Why is the Speccy version of *SOTB* monochrome? Hello? Is this a bad connection? There's static on the line – it sounds almost like several people laughing raucously at once.

Ahem. It seems Gremlin have wisely decided on good old two-colour hi-rez sprites for this one – and very snazzy they look too. Apparently they decided not to go the way everyone was predicting (ie attempting the colour) in order to squeeze in the 'atmosphere' and 'key features' of the original. The plot's certainly the same old nonsense – you play a Warrior

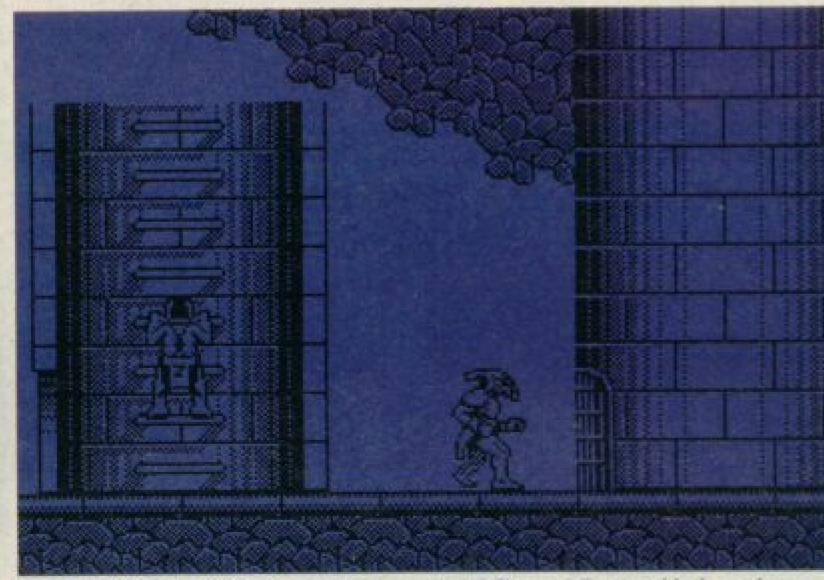


Messenger, discover the Beast really had you kidnapped as a child, and so you decide to do the decent thing and set out to visit retribution, death and destruction on him and his minions. You stand alone, hopeless odds, etc etc.

Whether Gremlin can successfully enliven the action of the original remains to be seen, but from what we've gandered at it looks potentially rather great – find out for yourself when *The Beast* gallumphs your way this October.



Just one mystery remains – does our hero have a stupendously pointy head...



...or is it a bobble cap he insists on wearing? The public need to know!

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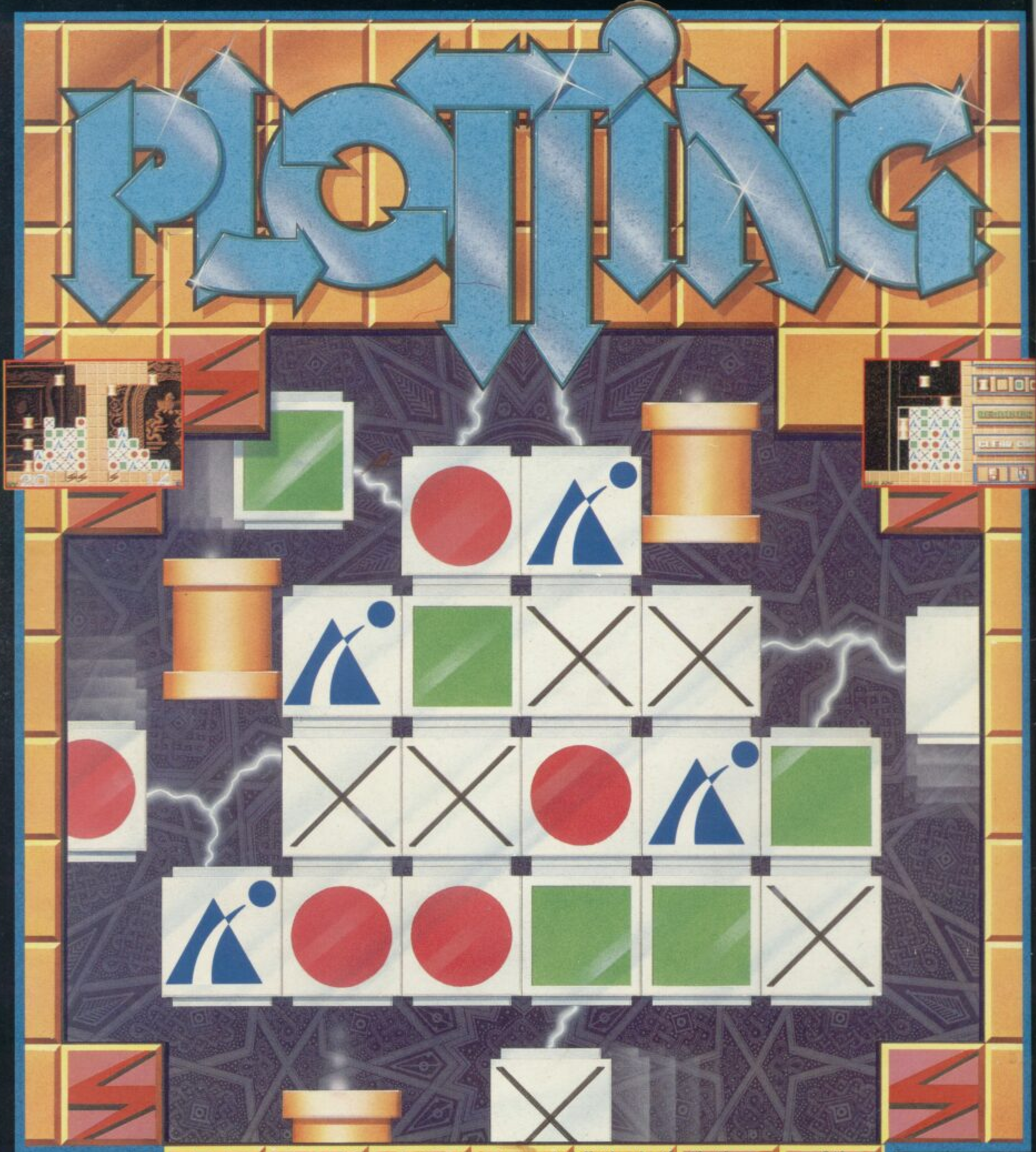


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